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XVII.—*Notes on the Ornithology of Malta.*

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Introduction.

THE Maltese islands are situated at a distance of about 60 miles to the south of Sicily and 180 miles to the north of Africa. They consist of a group of small islands running from north-west to south-east for a distance of 29 miles.

Malta, which is the largest island of the group, is $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and $8\frac{1}{4}$ miles broad, covering an area of 95 square miles; in shape it is an irregular oval, having the aspect of an inclined plane, rising abruptly from the sea on the south and gradually sinking into the waters towards the north and east. Here the coast is deeply indented with several fine bays and good harbours; on the southern precipitous part, however, no landing can be effected except at two or three very restricted points, which can be approached only in very small crafts.

Gozo comes next in size to Malta, and lies to the north-west of it; its length is $8\frac{3}{4}$ miles, its breadth $4\frac{1}{2}$, occupying an area of 20 square miles. The coast of this island is in elevation much more irregular than that of Malta, as sloping land often interrupts the precipitously rising coast. The island has no real harbour, and with the exception of the

inlets of Migiarro, Mgar, Xini, Xlendi, and Duejra on the south and west, and Marsalforno facing the north, the others are nothing more than very open bays.

Between Malta and Gozo lies the little island of Comino, at a distance of about half a mile from the latter and one mile or so from the former; it occupies an area of only one square mile.

Cominotto is only divided by a few yards' stretch of water from Comino, and Filfla lies at a distance of three miles off the south coast of Malta. Both these two islets may be practically considered nothing more than mere rocks; the second, however, is of some importance to the ornithologist, it being the chief breeding-station of our Shearwaters and Petrels, which a few years ago literally swarmed over this rock.

Besides the islets just mentioned, several other minor ones are scattered around the coast of both Malta and Gozo, but these are of no importance whatever from an ornithological point of view.

The climate of Malta is assuredly healthy, and though hot in summer is by no means tropical, as it has at times been stated; the winter can be compared to one of the milder northern springs.

No river, lake, or, in fact, any perennial water is to be found in these islands; consequently, no exuberant vegetation is to be observed. In consequence of this, and having moreover hundreds of guns and nets ever ready for any migrants, it is only natural that very few birds would consent to make these islands their home.

The chief trees met with here are the carob, fig, almond pomegranate, olive, orange, lemon, and Japanese medlar; prickly pears are also abundant. The carob trees are usually selected by our few breeding Warblers wherein to construct their nest, though some of these build also in several of the smaller trees. The Woodchat also seems to prefer the carob, though Schembri states that it builds in the almond tree.

The precipitous cliffs of both islands still afford shelter to

some Gulls, Shearwaters, Blue Rock-Thrushes, and a few Jackdaws and Rock-Pigeons, and every now and then a pair of Barn-Owls manage to lay in one of the thousand crannies of these cliffs ; but the poor birds are very seldom fortunate enough to see their progeny fly.

There is some marshy ground at the head of the bays of St. Paul and Melleha—it is, however, under cultivation ; this tract, known locally by the name “ Il Ghadira,” is still frequented by Waders and other migratory water-birds. A good extent of such ground existed at the head of the Grand harbour, but this has long been drained, and where once Waders abounded, the members of the military and naval forces now flock to play football, cricket, polo, and other games.

The fish-ponds of Marsascirocco and Marsascala, and the salt-pans at the Salina are also favourable resorts of Waders and water-loving species ; here, however, the sportsman is always posted and ever on the alert.

Considering the war waged against the feathered creatures, it will be seen that the list of the birds recorded is relatively rich.

The study of our ornithology has not been neglected, and this will also be subsequently seen.

Of local collections we have a pretty good number, and although some may have little or no scientific merit, a list of them may be interesting. The best are the following :—

(1) The University's, at Valletta. This contains a good number of species ; the older specimens are, however, not very well preserved, and the most interesting ones generally bear no date or locality.

(2) Col. Francia's, at Casal Lia. This collection contains a fairly good number of specimens, including several interesting and rare species, which are accompanied by the necessary data.

(3) Schembri's, at San Giorgio a Mare. This most interesting collection, made by the man whom we may call the father of Maltese ornithology, is unfortunately in a very

sad condition, and it is feared that the majority of specimens may be considered a total loss.

(4) Mr. C. Zammit Ganci's, at Casal Zebbug, contains also a good number of specimens, all of which have been taken and mounted by the collector himself.

(5) Mr. G. Dimech's, also at Casal Zebbug, contains specimens taken and mounted by the collector and his father, Mr. R. Dimech.

(6) Mr. G. Saliba's, at Rabato Gozo, is a small collection; it contains, however, the first example taken in Malta of the Black-bellied Sand-Grouse.

(7) Prof. Dr. E. C. Vassallo's, at Valletta, contains a number of interesting and rare species, mostly taken by Dr. Vassallo himself, and about which the Professor has some very interesting notes.

(8) Mr. A. Grech Ellul's, at Birehircara, contains a good number of specimens, all of which were received in the flesh by their collector, who is one of our best professional taxidermists.

(9) Mr. G. Agius's, at Marsasciroeco. This consists mostly of Waders and water-birds, shot by the collector, from the fish-ponds of Marsascala and Marsasciroeco.

(10) Mr. A. Cachia Zammit's, at San Giorgio a Mare. This is one of the older collections, which is fortunately in a good state of preservation; it contains amongst other varieties one of the few Pelicans taken in the island, and perhaps some of the specimens recorded by Schembri in his list of 1843.

(11) My private collection, at Valletta, contains now over 250 species and nearly 1000 specimens, all of which were received in the flesh and mounted by my brother, Mr. A. Despott, and myself. Amongst the rare specimens I can mention a Baikal Teal, an Egyptian Goose, a Guillemot, a Red-throated Diver, two Little Auks, a Jay, and a Bifasciated Lark.

In addition to these collections there are those of local bird-stuffers; these are, of course, continually fluctuating in

number, and, moreover, exotic species are very often introduced.

Mr. Micallef's collection was sold after his death, in 1913, and I am informed that a good part of it passed into the possession of Mr. A. Magri at Floriana.

To the student of our ornithology, visits to the Valletta Market may often prove profitable, especially during the spring and the autumn, when the poulterers' stalls are frequently stocked with many interesting species of migratory birds; but, in order that one may form an adequate idea of what the status of bird-life is in Malta, it might well be stated that the number of licensed sportsmen who overrun the 117 square miles covered by these islands is over 1000, perhaps twice as many if we count the unlicensed ones, and to these may also be added another army of netters. All these are, of course, a great help to the collector and epicures, but not so much to our agriculturists, who unfortunately are very ignorant of the real economic value of birds.

The published literature on Maltese ornithology is as follows :—

1760. DE REVILLE GODEHEN. "Sur le passage des Oiseaux de Malte," pub. in the *Mém. de Mat. et de Phys. prés. à l'Acad. des Sc. de Paris*, t. iii.—In this paper the author gives a list of the migratory birds observed by him during his stay in Malta.
1772. ABELA CIANTAR. 'Malta Illustrata.'—In this work the author gives a sort of an Ornithological Calendar, beginning from March and ending in February.
1841. THOMPSON, W. "Notice of migratory Birds which alighted on, or were seen from, H.M.S. 'Beacon,' Capt. Graves, on the passage from Malta to the Morea at the end of April 1841," *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.* (1) viii. pp. 125-129.—In this note the author mentions some migratory species observed by him during the cruise of H.M.S. 'Beacon.'
1843. SCHEMBRI, ANTONIO. 'Catalogo Ornitologico del gruppo di Malta.'—In this work, which is one of the best that has ever been published about the birds of Malta, the author enumerates 230 species, giving with each a short but very interesting note, together with the Latin, Italian, English, French, and Maltese names.

1843. SCHEMBRI, ANTONIO. 'Quadro geografico ornitologico.'—In this work the author gives in comparative columns the status of birds in Malta, Sicily, Rome, Tuscany, Liguria, Nice, and Gard.
1844. STRICKLAND, H. E. "On *Thalassidroma melitensis*, Schembri, a supposed new species of Stormy Petrel," Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. (1) xiv. pp. 348-9.—In this note the author shows that the *Thalassidroma melitensis* Schembri is nothing but the *Procellaria pelagica* of authors.
1850. STRICKLAND, H. E. "On the occurrence of *Charadrius virginicus*, Bork., at Malta," Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. (2) v. pp. 40-42.—In this note a description is given of the specimen taken in the island.
- 1858-63. GULIA, GAVINO. 'Repertorio di Storia Naturale.'—This work contains some interesting notes about a few of our birds.
1860. MEDLYCOTT, WILLIAM C. B. 'Catalogue of the Birds of Malta.'—A list in which are enumerated practically the same species given by Schembri.
1862. WRIGHT, C. A. "Lista di uccelli Maltesi," pub. in the 'Repertorio di Storia Naturale' of Dr. Gavino Gulia.
1863. WRIGHT, C. A. "A visit to the islet of Filfla, on the south coast of Malta," 'Ibis,' 1863, pp. 435-440.—The author gives here an interesting account of his excursion to Filfla, and mentions the occurrence of *Puffinus anglorum*, *Puffinus cinereus*, and *Thalassidroma pelagica*.
1864. WRIGHT, C. A. "List of the Birds observed in the islands of Malta and Gozo," 'Ibis,' 1864, pp. 42-73, 137-157.—In this list, the most accurate ever published on the birds of Malta, the author enumerates 253 species, giving with each a short note, the English, and in the majority of cases also the Maltese name.
1864. SPERLING, R. M. "Some account of an Ornithologist's cruise in the Mediterranean," 'Ibis,' 1864, pp. 268-290.—In this note some of our migratory birds are mentioned.
1864. WRIGHT, C. A. "Appendix to a list of Birds observed in the islands of Malta and Gozo," 'Ibis,' 1864, pp. 291-292.—In this appendix the author gives two new occurrences, and records other rare birds observed since the publication of his list.
1865. WRIGHT, C. A. "Second Appendix to a list of Birds observed in the islands of Malta and Gozo," 'Ibis,' 1865, pp. 459-466.—New and rare occurrences are recorded in this note.
1866. GRANT, WILLIAM. "Birds found in Malta and Gozo, with their English, Maltese, and Latin names."—In this list, which is not very accurate, several species have been included which have no claim to figure amongst Maltese birds.

1839. WRIGHT, C. A. "Third Appendix to a list of Birds observed in Malta and Gozo," 'Ibis,' 1869, pp. 245-256.—The author enumerates here eight additional species, and criticises very severely the catalogue compiled by Grant.
1870. ADAMS, A. L. "Notes of a Naturalist in the Nile Valley and Malta."—A very good picture of bird-life in Malta is given in this work.
1870. WRIGHT, C. A. "Fourth Appendix to a list of Birds observed in Malta and Gozo," 'Ibis,' 1870, pp. 488-493.—In this note a new occurrence is recorded, besides that of several other rare birds.
- 1871-72. SALVADORI, TOMMASO. "Uccelli," in 'Fauna d'Italia,' parte ii. Vallardi, Milano.—In this work a reference is made to some of our birds, and the Maltese names are also given.
1874. WRIGHT, C. A. "Fifth Appendix to a list of Birds observed in Malta and Gozo," 'Ibis,' 1874, pp. 223-241.—Eleven additional species are recorded in this note.
1878. BARBARO, G. C. "The Birds of Malta, with their systematic English and Italian names and seasons" (Malta).—In this list 270 species are enumerated, some of which, however, have no right whatever to figure amongst the Maltese birds.
1884. BECHER, E. F. "Shearwaters on the rock of Filfla," 'Zoologist,' (3) viii. pp. 467-468.—In this note, giving a short account of an excursion to Filfla, the author mentions *Puffinus kuhli*, *P. anglorum*, *Procellaria pelagica*, and *Columba livia*.
1886. GIGLIOLI, ENRICO II. "Avifauna Italica, Elenco delle specie di Uccelli stazionarie o di passaggio in Italia, colla loro sinonimia volgare e con notizie piu specialmente intorno alle migrazioni ed alla nidificazione" (Firenze).—In this work reference is given to the Birds of Malta, and the Maltese name is given as well as those in other dialects.
1888. CASTAGNA, P. P. "It tair."—A list of birds known under a Maltese name, included in 'Lis Storia ta Malta bil gzejjer talha.'
- 1889-90. GULIA, GIOVANNI. "Prontuario di Storia Naturale."—Those birds only which have a local name figure in this work, and with each is given also the English, Latin, and Italian one, and, in several cases, the occurrence too.
1890. GALIZIA, G. S. "L'avvoltojo Grifone e sua cattura nell' Isola di Malta," pub. in 'Il Naturalista Maltese.'—In this note the author gives a description of the specimen preserved in the University Museum.
1890. FALZON, R. "Note Ornitologiche," pub. in 'Il Naturalista Maltese.'—In these notes the author records several rare birds observed by him in these islands. Amongst them he mentions *Alca torda*, *Corvus cornix*, *Athene noctua*, and *Lobipes hyperboreus*.

1891. GIGLIOLI, ENRICO HILLYER. 'Primo resoconto dei risultati dell' inchiesta ornithologica in Italia' (three volumes, Firenze).—In this work the author takes Malta as forming geographically a part of Italy, and includes many ornithological occurrences, giving the names in various dialects as well as in Maltese.
1892. TAGLIAFERRO, N. "On *Sula bassana* in Malta," pub. in the 'Mediterranean Naturalist.'—By this note the author records the occurrence of the Gannet in Malta.
1893. TAGLIAFERRO, N. "*Falco punicus* in Malta," 'Mediterranean Naturalist,' iii. p. 366.—The author records the nesting of this species in Gozo, and the addition of a young male bird to the collection of the University Museum.
1895. BLASIUS, R. "Ornis von Malta und Gozo und den umliegenden Inseln, mit Beiträgen aus den ornithologischen Berichten der Leuchtturm-wächter von Dellimara und Giordan aus den Jahren 1886-91," 'Ornis,' Braunschweig, viii. pp. 139-211.—In this list, which enumerates 288 species, some very interesting notes are given; in some cases, however, the local name is somewhat defective.
1899. MACKAY, HUGH. "Ornithological notes from Malta," 'Zoologist,' (4) iii. pp. 254-258.—In this paper, in which no order is observed, several species of our birds are mentioned. In many cases, however, the observation seems to have been done rather superficially; in fact, some of our very common species figure as birds of rare occurrence, whilst others are included without sufficient evidence. Other statements are undoubtedly mistaken owing to wrong identification.
1905. GULIA, GIOVANNI. "Uccelli Migratori," pub. in the 'Guida Generale di Malta.'—This consists of a sort of a short calendar, giving the species of birds which are met with in these islands during each month.
1907. LEACH, C. 'Catalogue of the Collection of Birds of Malta belonging to the Museum of the University.'—The compiler of this list, who was at the time Curator of the Museum, enumerates 224 species, giving with each the Latin, English, Italian, and Maltese names. Some species, however, are included, which, though existing in the Museum, bear neither date nor locality and are very probably imported specimens.
1907. GIGLIOLI, ENRICO H. 'Avifauna Italica' (Firenze).—In this work the author gives several notes of species which have occurred in Malta. The Maltese name is also given with the majority; in several cases, however, this is not correct.
1909. CARUANA GATO, ALFREDO. "Sulla straordinaria comparsa in Malta della *Loxia curvirostra*, L.," pub. in the 'Archivum Melitense.'—In this note the author records the occurrence of the Crossbill in Malta during the summer of 1909.

1910. GULIA, GIOVANNI. "Il calendario del Cacciatore Maltese," pub. in the 'Guida Generale di Malta.'—This is a practical guide for the Maltese sportsman, for whom it was especially intended by the author.
1913. ARRIGONI DEGLI ODDI, E. 'Elenco degli uccelli Italiani' (Roma).—Several notes about the occurrence of certain species in Malta are given in this list.
1913. DESPOTT, G. "La Berta Maggiore del Mediterraneo, *Puffinus Kuhl*, Ciefa, una specie che si estingue," pub. in the 'Archivum Melitense.'—In this note the wanton destruction of Shearwaters in these islands is deplored.
1913. DESPOTT, G. "Lista delle nuove specie di uccelli, &c." pub. in the 'Archivum Melitense.'—In this list 33 species are enumerated, the majority of which are recorded for the first time.
1914. KENNEDY, J. R. "Baikal Teal (*Nettion formosum*)."—In a letter published in the 'Ibis' (p. 166) the writer gives an account of the specimen seen by him and taken in Malta on the 16th of April, 1913.
1914. DESPOTT, G. "Oche lombardelle catturate nell' Isola di Malta il 7 Gennajo," pub. in 'La Tribuna Sport' (Napoli).—The capture of five specimens of the White-fronted Goose is reported in this note.
1914. DESPOTT, G. "*Chenaloper ægyptiacus*, L.," pub. in 'La Tribuna Sport' (Napoli).—In this note the occurrence of this species in Malta is reported.
1914. GHIDINI, ANGELO. "L'alzavola asiatica (*Nettion formosum*, Georgi) nel bacino del Verbano," 'Rivista Italiana Orn.' iii. pp. 145-7.—Amongst several records of the species in Italy the author includes the occurrence in Malta on the 16th of April, 1913, and in a footnote the occurrence of the Egyptian Goose in our island is also reported.
1915. DESPOTT, G. "A list of the Birds of Malta." Malta, 8vo.—In this list are enumerated 340 species; with each is given a short note, and, besides the Latin, the English, Italian, and Maltese names are given.
1915. HONY, G. B. "Bird-notes from the Mediterranean," 'Zoologist,' (4) xix. pp. 106-108.—In these notes a reference is made to Malta where, amongst other birds, the author states that he saw two Blackcaps during his short stay. This species being rather rare, its occurrence here is always worth recording.
1916. DESPOTT, G. "The Breeding-birds of Malta," 'Zoologist,' (4) xx. pp. 161-181.—In this paper the species enumerated are thirty-two in number; with each a note about the breeding-habits, in these islands, is given.
1916. DESPOTT, G. "i. Egyptian Nightjar. ii Black-bellied Sand-Grouse. iii. White Storks in Malta," 'Zoologist,' (4) xx. pp. 194,

231, 232.—These are three short notes recording the occurrence of these rare species in the Maltese islands.

1916. DESPOTT, G. "Ornithological report for the Maltese islands (July–Dec. 1915)," 'Zoologist,' (4) xx. pp. 378–388.—Amongst other occurrences are those of a Short-toed Eagle and a Peregrine Falcon.
1916. DESPOTT, G. "Ornithological report for the Maltese islands (Jan.–June 1916)," 'Zoologist,' (4) xx. pp. 441–452.—The most important occurrence noted is that of the Cream-coloured Courser which passed in relatively large numbers during this period.
1916. DESPOTT, G. "*Anser albifrons*," pub. in the 'Archivum Melitense.'—This is a detailed note about the occurrence of the five White-fronted Geese taken in 1914.

Note.—The local names for several of the new species have been given me by the Hon. Dr. Magro, Rector of the University, who is one of the most competent authorities and enthusiastic students of the Maltese dialect; and for the majority of species the name given is a translation or the equivalent of either the Latin, English, or Italian names.

The number in brackets given with each species refers to that in my 'List of the Birds of Malta,' published in 1915.

Systematic List.

1. (143) *Corvus corax corax* L. The Raven.

Local name: *Ciaulun*.

The only specimen I have seen in the flesh was taken in the vicinity of Gargur on the 29th of November, 1906, and Mr. Micallef, to whom it was sent to be mounted, then assured me that it was the fifth specimen which he had handled—the other four having occurred also in the autumn in different years. Another local name for this species is *Corvu*: this appears, however, not to be much in use.

2. (144) *Corvus corax tingitanus* Irby. Irby's Raven.

Local name: *Ciaulun Ta Barbarja*.

On the 12th of May, 1912, Mr. Micallef showed me two of these birds which were taken in the vicinity of Krendi

five days before; he also told me that these birds are rare and irregular visitors to these islands, but from his experience he considered them of a more frequent occurrence than the preceding. The above-mentioned specimens are, however, the only ones which I have seen. The local name was given me by Mr. Micallef.

3. (142) *Corvus cornix cornix* L. The Hooded Crow.

Local name: *Ciaula griza*.

A very rare straggler. The first mention of the species appears to have been made by my friend Prof. R. Falzon, in 1890. I know of three other specimens taken in these islands: the first was killed in the vicinity of Notabile and was stuffed by Mr. Micallef, who sold it to a local collector; the second I found in the Valletta Market on the 8th of April, 1914, this was shot in Gozo the day before and now forms part of my collection; the third is the specimen preserved in the University Museum, which, though bearing neither date nor locality, is said to have been taken in these islands. In spite of its rarity, it is said that in some parts of Sicily this species is known by the name of "Maltese Crow." The local name given is nothing but a translation of the Italian name, and by it the bird is known to local collectors and ornithologists.

4. (145) *Corvus frugilegus frugilegus* L. The Rook.

Local name: *Corru*.

A rare visitor, generally seen during the autumn, though I have seen it more than once also during the spring. According to Schembri, it occurs on passage in October and November, generally arriving in flocks of five or six individuals. Wright records the species as very common during the winters of 1861-62 and 1862-63, when he says it remained with us for several months; he observed it also at the beginning of spring in 1864. I saw three individuals on the 11th of April, 1916, and Capt. Scott Hopkins reported to me three others observed by him on the 6th of the following May in the vicinity of Hagiar Kim. Besides the

local name above given, *Ciaulun* and *Gharab* are to be found also on other lists; the first, as we have seen, however, is also given to the Raven, and the second is undoubtedly very little in use.

5. (141) *Colæus monedula monedula* (L.). The Jackdaw.

Local name: *Ciaula*.

This species was very abundant, but owing to a continuous persecution has become very scarce—so much so, in fact, that its temporary protection has been felt necessary. The few birds which remain breed in the inaccessible cliffs on the south of the islands, a few may also be seen about the precipitous rocks near Mellaha and St. Paul's Bay. When Wright published his list of the birds observed by him in these islands, the Jackdaw appears to have been on the increase. I quite remember the time when these birds could be observed over the roofs of houses in the very centre of Valletta, and Adams says that the Jackdaw used to breed in the fortifications of the town. Wright says that it is asserted somewhere that the Jackdaw was imported by the Knights of St. John, but this statement seemed to him rather apocryphal. After careful observations, however, I came to the conclusion that new arrivals of these birds are never observed in these islands, so that what seemed apocryphal to Wright might be a real fact. In an old manuscript in the Malta Public Library, it is said that a reward was offered by the Government of the Order for the head and pair of feet of this bird, and to-day it is quite difficult to obtain a specimen, even if one offers a shilling or two. Another local name for this species is *Cola*, which is, however, practically out of use.

6. (140) *Pica pica pica* (L.). The Magpie.

Local name: *Ciaula bajda*.

Schembri records a specimen shot in these islands on the 7th of October, 1839, and Wright records the same occurrence, saying that the individual might have been a straggler blown off the coast of Sicily, where the species exists in great numbers. There is a specimen in the University Museum which bears no date or locality, but on

which may be observed evident signs of captivity, so that if the specimen in question is the one recorded by Schembri, the occurrence is much in need of further evidence. It is to be further noted that these birds are at times imported from Sicily and sold to local bird-fanciers, so that if even an individual is taken careful enquiries should be made before recording it as a locally occurring bird.

7. (139) *Garrulus glandarius glandarius* (L.). The Jay.

Local name: *Sultan icciaul*.

In my list of the birds of Malta of 1915, I gave this species as one of doubtful occurrence, saying that the only specimen existing in Malta is the one in the University Museum, and that this, like many of the older specimens, though stated to have been locally taken, bears neither locality nor date. On the 10th of May, 1916, however, I found a specimen in the Valletta Market; it was obtained the day before from the limits of Casal Zabbar. The example was in very good condition, not bearing the slightest sign of having been kept in confinement; it now forms part of my collection, and I consider it a genuine locally occurring bird. The Maltese name above given has been suggested by my lamented friend the late Prof. Tagliaferro, and has already been accepted by those interested in our ornithology.

8. (136) *Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris* L. The Starling.

Local name: *Sturnell*.

Occurs in fairly large numbers on migration during the autumn, the first arrivals are generally observed about the end of September; the bulk of the birds, however, are never noticed before the middle of October, when large flocks are usually noticed coming in about sunset. Both gun and net, unfortunately, await the poor migrants, and in a short time their numbers are markedly reduced. The few individuals which find sanctuary in our public gardens, and thus escape destruction, linger here until the beginning of spring, when they depart. I have a specimen

in my collection taken on the 26th of May, 1913—an exceptionally late date for the occurrence of the Starling in Malta. I have been assured that several females, on dissection, were found to contain ovaries in such an advanced state that in a short time they would undoubtedly have laid; in spite of this, however, I have no difficulty in saying that we have not yet any authentic record of the breeding of the species with us. According to Schembri, new arrivals of the Starling are noticed in March; I believe, however, that these are only some of those which have wintered with us.

9. (137) *Sturnus unicolor* Temm. The Sardinian Starling.
Local name: *Sturnell iswed*.

A very rare visitor, first reported by Schembri, who states that two specimens were shot from a flock of five or six by Mr. B. Ellul. Wright also records several locally taken specimens. I have seen three stuffed specimens in Mr. Micallef's collection, and another one in the University Museum—this bears neither date nor locality. The three in Mr. Micallef's collection were taken in October and handled by him in the flesh. In the autumn of 1907, I observed two of these birds together with the Common Starling, and another on the 5th of November, 1911; a specimen was shot in the neighbourhood of Birzebbugia in the summer of 1916—this was preserved by a local bird-stuffer. To the majority of bird-dealers and poulterers, the species is known by the name above given. All, however, admit its rarity, and I have not yet succeeded in procuring a specimen for my collection, though I have done my very best.

10. (138) *Pastor roseus* (L.). The Rose-coloured Pastor.
Local name: *Sturnell rosa*.

A rather rare and irregular visitor. Schembri records the occurrence of five individuals: the first was seen by him at Bingemma in August 1835, the second in 1840, the third was taken in the nets in 1841, and another two observed also by

him near St. Paul's Bay in the spring of 1842. Wright records four individuals: the first was killed on the 7th of August, 1855, two were taken at the Marsa (for these no date is given), and the fourth was purchased by him in the Valletta Market during the first week of November, 1858. I have seen only one live specimen, and this was at "Tal Ghalia" on the 1st of November, 1906. There is a fine specimen in the University Museum—this, however, bears neither date nor locality; and I know of another in the collection of Mr. Micallef, who informed me that it was the sixth specimen which he had prepared. A specimen was taken in the vicinity of Birzebbugia in the middle of July, 1916. The local name *Malvizz rosa*, given in other lists, is not used any longer, and I do not know if it has ever been in use.

11. (75) *Oriolus oriolus oriolus* (L.). The Golden Oriole.

Local name: *Tajra safra*.

A regular migrant during the spring and autumn. It is abundant, however, during the former season and in the latter it is usually scarce. During the spring the first arrivals are noticed by the middle or end of March; the bulk, however, are not observed before April, when it is a common occurrence to see the carob trees quite full with these birds, and when great slaughter is wrought by sportsmen, both licensed and unlicensed ones. Some of these birds usually linger here till the end of May, and a few individuals occasionally prolong their stay till the middle of June. I remember years when the Orioles appeared in very small numbers; this is, however, only an exception to the rule. Both Schembri and Wright are of opinion that these birds would breed here if they were not so much persecuted. And I quite share this opinion, for I have often dissected females in which the ovaries were so ripe that in a few days the birds would undoubtedly have laid. Besides the local name above given, we find in other lists the name *Tajra hadra*, which is said to be used for the female and young birds; this is, however, not much in use at present, and the name

Tajra safra is given indiscriminately to both the males, females, and young.

12. (109) *Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes* (L.).
The Hawfinch.

Local name : *Ghasfur taz-zebbug*.

Both Schembri and Wright say that this species occurs on migration in November and December, and is common in some years and rare in others. From my personal experience I can say that it is to be considered as a rare bird, and that it is only in an exceptional way when it does occur in any considerable numbers. When this happens, the first arrivals are noticed by the third or last week of October, and when the birds are not seen at that time they are generally not expected to pass at all. In 1907 and 1909 we had an exceptionally abundant passage of Hawfinches, and in 1909 especially, flocks composed of ten or more individuals were by no means a rare sight; during that year the first arrivals were observed on the 17th of October, and I have then seen one taken as late as the end of March. In 1907 I noted the first arrivals by the first week of October; the birds, however, did not seem to linger here for more than two months.

13. (98) *Chloris chloris chloris* (L.). The Greenfinch.

Local name : *Verdun*.

Pretty common and arriving in tolerably large numbers during some years, becoming scarce, however, in others. The first arrivals are generally noticed by the middle of October; the bulk of the birds, however, are not observed before the end of this or the beginning of the following month. Solitary individuals are at times seen as early as the first days of October, but this is to be considered as quite unusual; the few individuals which escape the nets, set for them and for other Finches, usually stay here for the winter. In January fresh arrivals are often noticed; these, however, stay here for a rather short period and generally depart together with those which have passed the winter with us. In May 1910 I found a nest of the Greenfinch, and I have been assured that the case, though

very rare, is by no means unique. Like all other finches the Greenfinch is severely persecuted, and, being a rather confident species, it is very difficult for it not to fall a victim to one of the numerous guns or nets.

14. (99) *Chloris chloris aurantiiventris* (Cab.). Algerian Greenfinch.

Local name : *Verdun second*.

No mention of this species is made by Schembri, and Wright says he has never met with it here. I have seen two or three locally taken specimens, but, not knowing at the time that they belonged to a distinct variety, did not trouble to preserve them. I have been assured by several netters and fowlers that these birds are more frequent than I imagined, and that they are distinguished from the Common Greenfinch by the local name given above. The last specimen which I have seen was taken within the limits of Zurrico by my friend, Giuseppe Vella of that village, on the 12th of November, 1911; it lived for two years in confinement and was crossed with a Canary in the spring of 1912.

15. (93) *Carduelis carduelis carduelis* (L.). The Goldfinch.

Local name : *Gardill*.

Schembri gives this species as rather common and occurring on migration in April and May; he also states that in his time it was beginning to be here a pretty frequent breeder too. Wright also repeats this last statement, saying, however, that the species is not very common, and that it occurs in October and again in April and May. From my own observations I can say that the Goldfinch is a very scarce migrant during the autumn, sometimes occurring also during the spring; on exceptional occasions it has been known to arrive in fairly good numbers, but these cases are to be considered very rare—the only case in my memory when this happened was in October 1908. The occurrence of the species in spring is, in my opinion, also quite exceptional; when they do arrive, however, during that season, if left undisturbed, they generally breed with us

16. (94) *Carduelis carduelis major* (Tacz.). The Eastern Goldfinch.

Local name: *Gardill ta Costantinopli*.

This Goldfinch is often imported to Malta, so that specimens which are at times taken might easily be individuals escaped from captivity; but as I have seen two examples obtained during the migration season in a good state of plumage, quite incompatible with specimens which had been kept in confinement, I give the species a place on the list of the birds of Malta, adding, however, that further evidence is desirable. Bird-catchers and dealers assure me that they have met with the species several times and that they know it by the local name given above.

17. (95) *Carduelis spinus* (L.). The Siskin.

Local name: *Ecora*.

It may be said that a few specimens occur annually; during some years, however, the species is known to arrive in pretty good numbers. Schembri says that it is here asserted that this takes place almost periodically every seven years. I remember several seasons when not a specimen could be observed; when it does occur it is generally seen by the end of October, it becomes more common in November, and in winter it usually disappears. I know two occasions when the species was observed at the beginning of spring; this, however, is undoubtedly quite exceptional.

18. (110) *Carduelis linaria linaria* (L.). The Mealy Red-pole.

Local name: *Giojjin salvagg*.

I only know of one specimen which was taken in Malta. It was brought to me by my friend G. Vella of Zurricco, who captured it within the limits of that village on the 20th of October, 1909. The local name given is the one by which Vella called the bird, and I think it might well be kept for the species, as the word *salvagg* is often given to any rare congener of species which are common here.

19. *Carduelis linaria cabaret* (P. L. S. Müll.). The Lesser Redpole.

Local name : *Baghal tal giojgin*.

A specimen was taken in the vicinity of Zurrigo on the 18th of November, 1916; it was brought over to Giulio Mallia, one of the bird-dealers in St. John's Square, and it was sold by him to a bird-fancier from Marsa; the bird was quite unknown to all the dealers present, and was soon given the name of *Baghal tal giojgin*. The name *Baghal* is also usually given to any rare species which occurs for the first time. The Lesser Redpole has not been recorded further south than Sicily, and in that island the occurrence appears to be also unique.

20. (109) *Carduelis cannabina cannabina* (L.). The Linnet.

Local name : *Giojgin*.

Very common on migration in the autumn. The first arrivals are generally noticed by the middle of October; the bulk of the birds, however, are never observed before the beginning of the following month. By the middle of November our valleys are quite full of Linnets, but the greater part are wantonly taken by both the clap and the bat net; the greatest destruction is, however, wrought by means of this last instrument, the poor birds being caught in hundreds of dozens, to appear the next morning on the stalls at the Valletta Market and sold as *beccafichi*, or are more quickly consigned to the pot of the netters themselves. When the number of these birds has been brought down considerably and it is considered no longer worth while to use the bat-net, the few birds which are left usually linger throughout the winter and for a greater part of the spring, when they occasionally breed with us. The local name *Giojgin tal warda*, given by Giglioli, is intended for the male in full plumage; it is, however, not much in use. Another local name given to adult specimens is *Giojgin ta l'erba bianca*, but this also appears to be dying out.

21. (96) *Serinus canarius serinus* L. The Serin.

Local name : *Apparell*.

During some years this bird is as common as the Linnet, though it generally arrives at a later date. When a chance is given to it we find it lingering throughout the winter and for a good part of the spring ; but unhappily, like the Linnet, it is also subjected to persecution and is wantonly destroyed by both the clap and the bat nets. Of the countless numbers of these birds which arrive annually, not one in a thousand survives till the following summer ; it is even said that many persons earn a living by the capture of these birds ! The Serin has been known to nest here when fortune protects it, and it would assuredly be a more frequent breeder if it were not persecuted to such an extent.

22. (97) *Serinus canarius canarius* (L.). The Wild Canary.

Local name : *Canal salvagg*.

On the 25th of January, 1896, a husbandman from Zurrico, M. A. Callus by name, whilst netting for Serins at Hal Far, captured two of these birds ; they soon excited the curiosity of all who saw them, and, as is generally the case in Malta, were taken to be a cross between the Serin and some other Finch. I was told, however, that a gentleman of the village, after consulting some books, declared the birds to be Wild Canaries, and they were consequently given the name *Canal salvagg*, which is nothing but a translation of the English and Italian name. In 1911 I asked Callus and another man who saw the specimens, several questions regarding them, and showed them pictures of several Finches, and they both of them agreed that the picture of the Wild Canary represented the specimens seen by them. For these reasons I have included the species amongst our avifauna, not pretending, however, that further evidence is not also desired. The local name *Canal salvagg* appears on other lists for other species ; it cannot stand, however, better than for this bird, knowing, moreover, that the other species have also other and much better names too. In Giglioli's

list this species has been reported as forming one of Italy's rare visitors, but in the 'Elenco degli Uccelli Italiani' of Count Dr. E. Arrigoni degli Oddi, published in 1913, it is reported among the species erroneously included in the Italian list.

23. (113) *Pyrrhula pyrrhula europæa* Vieill. The Bullfinch.

Local name : *Bugheddum*.

The occurrence of this species is quite accidental. Schembri records one captured within the limits of Zurrigo in February 1840 and two shot by Mr. Ellul in March 1835. Wright reports also the same occurrences, adding, however, another one, which he says was taken some years afterwards. I have a pair in my collection which were taken within the limits of Zurrigo on the 27th of November, 1909. In some other lists the local name for this species appears as *Durrajsa hamra* (Red Bunting); the one above given and which I have taken from Mr. Micallef is, however, more to the point; moreover *Durrajsa hamra* is better suited, as suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro, to *Emberiza aureola*.

24. (114) *Pyrrhula pyrrhula pyrrhula* (L.). The Northern Bullfinch.

Local name : *Bugheddum prinim*.

Two specimens were taken by Rocco Schembri (Tal Pivri) whilst netting for Sparrows in the neighbourhood of Zurrigo on the 20th of August, 1909, and another by Rosario Psaila (Tal Ghaccari) from Binghisa in November of the same year. The specimens taken by Schembri lived for more than a year in confinement, the one taken by Psaila died after a few days. Of these two occurrences only the last is mentioned in my list of 1915, the other, by an oversight, has been left out; it figures, however, in my list of new additions to our avifauna, published in the 'Archivum Melitense' of 1913. The local name has been suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro.

25. (111) *Carpodacus erythrinus erythrinus* (Pall.). The Scarlet Bullfinch.

Local name: *Bumunkar*.

According to Wright, *Fringilla incerta*, of which Schembri records the capture of two specimens on the 25th of December, 1839, is now recognised to be the young of this species. Giglioli also says that the species has occurred in Malta, perhaps alluding to the specimens mentioned above. Another specimen was obtained near Zurrico by M. A. Callus, in the autumn of 1910. The local name, which is practically a translation of Grosbeak, was picked up from an old sportsman by the late Prof. Tagliaferro—besides this, however, there is also another local name, *Tusurier*; it appears, however, that the species is very little known either by this or by the other name, so that if one of these is to be chosen, the one which is a translation of Grosbeak is, in my opinion, to be preferred.

26. (112) *Erythrospiza githaginea githaginea* (Licht.). The Desert Bullfinch.

Local name: *Trumbettier*.

Schembri says that some of these birds, which he considers rare, occur almost annually from December to March, and Wright, who is practically of the same opinion, records the capture of two specimens—one during the last week of October 1860, the other in November 1862. In his fourth appendix to the list of birds observed in Malta and Gozo, he says that several birds of this species were taken during the summer of 1869, and another was detected by him amongst the Finches in the market during the month of October. I have seen several specimens and, with the exception of one which was taken in May, all the others occurred during the summer months. I have asked several sportsmen and netters the month in which this species usually visits us, and all of them agree that this generally happens in July and August and very rarely, if ever, during the other months. The local name given is a translation of the Italian, and this is evidently taken, as Wright says,

from the note of the bird, which is very like the sound produced by a penny trumpet. I have a live specimen in my possession which I succeeded in crossing with a hen canary, the offspring being in shape and colour like the cock bird—in size, however, they are markedly less.

27. (115) *Loxia curvirostra curvirostra* L. The Common Crossbill.

Local name: *Mkass*.

A quite accidental and very irregular visitor to these islands. Schembri says that it occurs only at rare intervals, and this usually happens in September; he also states that he had seen more than ten individuals between 1838 and 1843. Wright is practically of the same opinion as regards the occurrence of the species, and records the capture of two specimens, one in October 1861 and the other in October 1863. A rather plentiful passage of Crossbills occurred on the 7th of July, 1909, and many of the birds continued to be captured during the following two months. In the second week of July 1916 we had another small passage of the species, and a few specimens have been taken too. The majority of the specimens which are seen in local collections are, however, those which were taken in the summer of 1909. Another local name for this bird is *Crocier*, which is a corruption of the Italian *crociere*, but this is apparently in very little use; in some lists we also find the bird called *Ortulan gheddumu imsallab*—I do not know, however, if this name was ever used.

28. (106) *Fringilla cœlebs cœlebs* L. The Chaffinch.

Local name: *Sponsun*.

A bird of regular passage during the autumn, generally occurring in fairly good numbers during some years—it becomes scarce, however, in others. I remember two seasons when these birds could be considered rarities. The first arrivals are usually noticed by the last week of October, the bulk of the birds, however, are never seen before the first days of the following month. Both Schembri and Wright say that the Chaffinches which

arrive here in October remain for the winter; from my personal observations, however, I can say that such is the persecution these birds are subjected to, that very few chances are given them for wintering here. The local name *Sponsoun*, given by Giglioli, is evidently a misprint.

29. (107) *Fringilla cœlebs spodiogenys* Bp. The Algerian Chaffinch.

Local name : *Sponsun abjad*.

Wright says that he never met with this form of the Chaffinch in Malta. I saw two specimens on the 29th of October, 1908; these were taken in the vicinity of Casal Axiak by a country lad, nick-named "Taz-zaram." Two days later I was fortunate enough to capture a specimen myself, so I no longer hesitate to admit the species to our list. During the summer of 1911 another of these birds was taken by a man who was netting for Sparrows; knowing, however, that during that summer several of these Chaffinches had been imported from the north coast of Africa, I cannot give the occurrence except as doubtful. The local name *Sponsun abjad* has been obtained from the dealers on St. John's Square (Valletta).

30. *Fringilla montifringilla* L. The Brambling.

Local name : *Sponsun salvagg*.

Schembri says that this species, which is not common, arrives here in October, and Wright, who considers it rather rare, says that a few are taken nearly every year. From my own experience I cannot but call these birds rare. The specimens I have seen were always taken during the autumn, but their passage by no means appears to be an annual occurrence. I have seen a specimen in the possession of Lorenzo Calleja which was a cross between this and the Common Chaffinch.

31. (103) *Passer montanus montanus* (L.). The Tree-Sparrow.

Local name : *Ghasfur tal bejt tas-sigiar*.

Schembri says that this species is rather rare, and it is

generally confused with the Italian and Spanish Sparrows. Wright, however, says that he knew only one specimen taken in these islands and that it was in the collection of Schembri, who had asked him to correct the error he fell into when he said that this Sparrow bred in Malta. In October 1912, the species occurred in fairly good numbers—I obtained two specimens from Pietro Darmanin (Tal melh), a husbandman from Zurrico, who captured five individuals in the neighbourhood of his village. Besides these, I saw another pair which were taken in my presence from a flock of five or six by Mr. Conti, who was netting for Finches at Wied il Koton in November of the same year. Mr. Micallef took nine or ten other specimens during that season, and the specimen in the University Museum is one of these. The local name given above, though rather long, is practically a translation of the English "Tree-Sparrow," and is certainly more correct than the local name given by Giglioli—*Ghasfur tal bejt abjad*, which means White Sparrow.

32. (101) *Passer italiae italiae* (Vieill.). The Italian Sparrow.

Local name: *Ghasfur tal bejt second*.

There appears to be some confusion about this species in both Schembri's and Wright's notes. I have no doubt, however, that the species, though rare, does really occur. It has been met with at least twice. The first time a specimen was taken by Lorenzo Calleja in the spring of 1909; this was given to me and lived for several years in confinement, when it easily crossed with the Spanish Sparrow. The second time it was reported to me by my friend Mr. Jos. Zammit, who captured a specimen in June 1916. In the 'Catalogue of the Collection of the Birds of Malta' the local name for this species is *Ghasfur tal bejt iswed*, which means Black Sparrow; this, of course, is not at all befitting, as the Italian Sparrow is in no way black. The name which I have selected has been suggested by the Hon. Prof. Magro.

33. (102) *Passer hispaniolensis maltæ* Hart. Sicilian Sparrow.

Local name : *Ghasfur tal bejt*.

As is the case with many other countries, the Sparrow was once so abundant that it was considered a nuisance, but now, and it sounds almost incredible, it has become, at least in some localities, rather scarce. Our farmers, sportsmen, and netters have succeeded in bringing down its numbers so low that it was felt necessary that a temporary protection should be afforded to it. A few years ago Sparrows could be observed in countless numbers, even in Valletta ; to-day, however, one might traverse a good tract of the island without meeting with, say, a dozen of these birds.

34. (104) *Petronia petronia petronia* (L.). The Rock-Sparrow.

Local name : *Ghasfur tal bejt salvagg*.

Casual and very rare. Recorded first by Schembri, who says that a specimen in his collection was captured in the spring of 1839. Wright also records one in his collection which was captured alive on the 23rd of November, 1862, and another in the possession of Dr. Gulia captured also alive in February 1864. In the fourth appendix to his list, Wright records an unusually numerous passage of these birds, which took place in the autumn of 1869, when a good many were taken by both net and gun.

I had a pair which were shot at Ghar Kirdua on the 27th of September, 1905, and I saw another exposed for sale, together with the Common Sparrow, on the 7th of January, 1912. The first two specimens I did not preserve, as I had not yet commenced collecting ; for the third I could not trace the provenance, and as it had, moreover, evident signs of its having been kept in confinement, I thought it would be better not to admit it into my collection.

The local name appears on the list of Prof. Blasius, who perhaps borrowed it from Giglioli.

35. (105) *Gymnoris flavicollis flavicollis* (Frankl.). The Yellow-throated Sparrow.

Local name : *Ghasfur tal bejt sidirtus afra*.

I have a specimen in my collection which was given to me alive by my friend Mr. Jos. Zammit, who captured it in the neighbourhood of Krendi in November 1912. This specimen was in such a good condition of plumage that it could not possibly have escaped from captivity, and for this reason I had no hesitation in admitting it to our list. It lived for nearly two years in my possession, and it showed a marked seasonal change in its plumage. The local name which has been suggested by the Hon. Prof. Magro is practically, like the English, an equivalent of the Latin.

36. (116) *Emberiza calandra calandra* L. The Corn-Bunting.

Local name : *Durrajsa*.

This was once one of our more common resident and breeding species; owing, however, to a continuous persecution, especially during the breeding-season, it has shown a very marked decrease. Fresh arrivals from abroad appear to take place during both seasons, and these in some way serve to make up for the great destruction the poor birds are subjected to.

37. (119) *Emberiza citrinella citrinella* L. The Yellow Bunting.

Local name : *Durrajsa safra*.

In Giglioli's 'Avifauna Italica,' under this heading, the Maltese name *Karmec* is given with a query, and it appears that for this reason Blasius included the species in his list. Arrigoni also reported the species as of doubtful occurrence in these islands. On the 6th of November, 1910, however, I was fortunate enough to capture a male and a female, which now form part of my collection; and a few days later a friend of mine, Mr. Georgio Camilleri, captured another male. On the 30th of October, 1912, I captured another specimen in the neighbourhood of Birzebbugia, from which locality were also taken the above-mentioned ones. The local name given by Giglioli for this species is also given to one or two more of our birds;

the one which I have selected is a pure translation, like the English and Italian, and has already been taken up by all those interested in our birds.

38. (117) *Emberiza melanocephala* Scop. The Black-headed Bunting.

Local name : *Durrajsa rasha seuda*.

Only a straggler : reported first by Wright in the third appendix to his list of Maltese birds, where he says that a specimen was obtained in 1867 and was kept alive for some months ; he also says that Drs. Gulia and Delicata mention having observed it. Giglioli states that the species is of accidental occurrence in Malta, referring perhaps to the statements given above ; he also gives the local name, *Durrajsa rasha seuda*. In my list of 1915 I left out these occurrences, and simply recorded the specimen in my collection, which was taken at Zurrico on the 12th of October, 1912. There is a specimen in the University Museum, which is in a very bad condition ; it bears neither date nor locality—from the style of its mounting, however, it might be the one recorded by Wright.

39. (118) *Emberiza aureola* Pall. The Yellow-breasted Bunting.

Local name : *Durrajsa hamra*.

A specimen was taken in the nets from the "Mghalak," a locality near Siggiewi, during the first week of January, 1913. It was purchased by Mr. Leach for the University Museum from Giulio Mallia, the bird-dealer on St. John's Square. The specimen was living at the University, until last April, and the skin is now preserved there. The local name indicates the reddish brown which is the general colour of the bird.

40. (120) *Emberiza cirrus* L. The Cirl-Bunting.

Local name : *Ortulan iswed*.

A straggler : first recorded by Schembri, who saw a specimen taken at Zurrico on the 20th of November, 1839.

Wright records one which he says appeared to be a female, and which was captured on the 12th of November, 1862, and another obtained by him which was captured alive in 1863. In the fourth appendix to his list he says that on the 10th and 11th of November, 1869, he picked up two males in the Valletta Market.

The only specimen which I have seen was captured within the limits of Zurrigo in the autumn of 1911. There is also an example in the University Museum, which, like the majority of the older specimens, is in a pitiful condition and bears neither locality nor date. The local name is a translation of the Italian, which in my opinion is rather misleading, for the bird is not black at all (*Zigolo nero* = *Ortulan iswed* = Black Bunting).

41. (121) *Emberiza hortulana* L. The Ortolan Bunting.

Local name: *Ortulan*.

According to both Schembri and Wright this species occurs on passage during the spring and autumn, and, though I have often heard this stated by others in regard to the autumn, I have not yet been able to observe it myself. I consider these birds as regular spring migrants, which are fairly common in some years, while in others very scarce.

42. (124) *Emberiza cia cia* L. The Meadow-Bunting.

Local name: *Ortulan salvagg*.

Very rare. First recorded by Schembri, who states he saw two individuals in December 1841. Wright records another taken alive in January 1863. I obtained a pair, captured alive, within the limits of Zurrigo on the 6th of November, 1912. One of these died a few days after its capture, and now forms part of my collection; the other lived till the 23rd of October, 1913. Both Schembri and Wright give *Canal salvagg* as the local name for this species. Giglioli and Blasius give also the one which I have selected and which I consider more to the point.

43. (122) *Emberiza rustica* Pall. The Rustic Bunting.

Local name : *Durrajsa salvaggia*.

I saw a mounted specimen some years ago in Mr. Micallef's collection, and I was assured by him that he received the bird in the flesh from a sportsman of Casal Gargur. The species figures also in the Catalogue of our birds in the University Museum, but no local name is given to it. The one given at the head of this note was proposed by Mr. Micallef, and I think it may be accepted, it being almost a translation of the Latin name.

44. (123) *Emberiza pusilla* Pall. The Little Bunting.

Local name : *Durrajsa kerknija*.

This species was reported for the first time amongst our avifauna by Wright, who records a specimen given to him by a bird-catcher on the 24th of October, 1873. I have seen only one specimen, which was taken alive by Rosario Psaila in the vicinity of Birzebbugia on the 29th of October, 1908. The local name for this Bunting has been suggested by the Hon. Prof. Magro, it being a translation of the Latin name.

45. (125) *Emberiza schœniclus schœniclus* (L.). The Reed-Bunting.

Local name : *Durrajsa seconda*.

First reported by Schembri, who says that the first specimen observed by him was taken on the 20th of November, 1839; it lived in confinement till the following March. According to Wright, it is one of the Buntings which only at rare intervals favour us with a visit; he records a specimen obtained by him on the 13th of November, 1860, and another on the 14th of November of the following year, also one netted 9th of December, 1871. On the 7th of November, 1910, I captured a male and a female in the neighbourhood of Birzebbugia, and another was taken at Binglusa by Giovanni Mizzi (Ta Matti) on the 10th of November, 1911. In the winter of 1913 my friend Dr. G. Zammit, of

Naxaro, sent to me a specimen which he shot at the Salina, this being the fourth specimen which I have seen in the flesh ; besides these, however, I have seen at least half-a-dozen stuffed specimens, all of which, I was assured, were taken in these islands. In Giglioli's and Blasius's lists the local name given for this species is *Ortulan tas' sidra*, which is certainly not in use at present ; the one given above has been taken from two or three sportsmen who have seen the birds, and have also assured me they have met with the species before.

46. (126) *Plectrophenax nivalis* L. The Snow-Bunting.

Local name : *Durrajsa tal maltemp.*

Reported for the first time by Schembri, who records the capture of two specimens in the autumn of 1840. Wright mentions a male bird in full plumage, shot by him at the Salina on the 13th of November, 1869, and a pair, one of which he secured for his collection, killed about the end of December of the same year.

On the 28th of October, 1911, I was fortunate enough to find a specimen in the Valletta Market ; this, I was told, was taken in the neighbourhood of Rabato on the preceding day. The local name given is the one used by the majority of those interested in ornithology ; the one given by Giglioli is intended for an albino form of the Common Bunting, which was in the University Museum, and was labelled as a specimen of the Snow-Bunting. It may also be noted here that Giglioli puts an exclamation mark after, saying that he knew that the species had been taken in Malta.

47. (129) *Melanocorypha calandra calandra* (L.). The Calandra Lark.

Local name : *Calandra.*

According to both Schembri and Wright, this species occurs on passage during the spring and autumn. I have never met with it during the first-named season, when it is often imported from Sicily. During the autumn, however,

it is frequently observed coming over with the first arrivals of the Sky-Lark. I cannot say that this is an annual occurrence—in fact, I remember several years when the species did not appear at all; and, though it is said that during some years these birds occur almost in considerable numbers, they are to be considered as generally scarce. I have a specimen in my collection, taken in the vicinity of Birzebbugia in the autumn of 1910, which appears to be very much larger than usual.

48. (129 *a*) *Melanocorypha sibirica* (Gm.). The White-winged Lark.

Local name : *Calandra salvaggia*.

Mr. Micallef mounted a specimen of this species which he bought alive from Giulio Mallia in 1904. The species figures also in the 'Catalogue of the Collection of the Birds of Malta'; this is, however, due to an erroneous identification of a pied example of the Short-toed Lark. The local name given above is the one which Mr. Micallef has given to the above-mentioned specimen.

49. (133) *Calandrella brachydactyla brachydactyla* (Leisl.). The Short-toed Lark.

Local name : *Bilbla*.

Occurring in very large numbers during the spring and towards the end of summer. The first arrivals are generally noticed during the first days of March, and continue to arrive till the end of April or the beginning of May. Many of these Larks remain here to breed; nidification generally commences late in April and goes on till the end of July. The birds which arrive in September only linger here till the beginning of October, when, together with the locally-bred individuals, they depart. A curious fact pointed out by sportsmen and bird-catchers is that this species never meets the Sky-Lark: when one arrives, the other is already gone. Specimens are often seen which are of a particularly red colour; others, on the contrary, are very markedly light.

50. (134) *Calandrella minor minor* (Cab.). The Lesser Short-toed Lark.

Local name: *Bilbla seconda*.

In my list of the birds of Malta, published in 1915, I said that this species is rare but possibly unobserved, and that it also nests at times with us. In my paper on the breeding birds of Malta, published in the 'Zoologist' for May 1916, I said that the few individuals which arrive in April together with the foregoing species remain here to breed. As it seems that these statements of mine are not quite clear, I give the occurrences of the species as I have them on my note-book:—

(1) Two specimens mounted by Mr. Micallef, taken in May 1891. Mr. Micallef, who stuffed three other specimens of this species, told me that these birds occurred in fairly good numbers in 1897, and he also showed me several clutches of eggs taken during that season: these were identical with the clutch in my collection about whose authenticity I have not the slightest doubt.

(2) In 1907 I had three specimens of this species, one of which was brought to me together with a clutch of four eggs. Of these three birds, one died after a three days' confinement; the other two lived till the beginning of winter of the same year (dates of capture of these three specimens: May 14 and 21, and June 4—the last being the one which was brought to me together with the clutch).

(3) On the 4th of May, 1909, I found a specimen in the Valletta Market, and fourteen days later I saw another at Giulio Mallia's, the bird-dealer.

(4) On the 29th of April, 1911, a specimen was sent to me by my friend, G. Vella of Zurrico; it was captured by him on the 22nd of the same month.

Besides this, several netters and bird-dealers assure me that the species is more frequent than I imagined, and that

they distinguish it from the common Short-toed Lark by the local name of *Bilbla seconda*.

A specimen in Dresser's collection, which was also examined by Giglioli, was taken in Malta.

51. (132) *Galerida cristata cristata* (L.). The Crested Lark.

Local name : *Ciuklajta tat-toppu*.

Schembri says "this species, which is the less common of the genus, arrives here in March and October, but not annually"; and Wright, in his list of 1864, says that the species is rare, but a few are sometimes taken in March and October; in the second appendix to his list, however, he says that he should have given Schembri as his authority for the above statement, and concludes by saying that though he had done his best he did not succeed in procuring a specimen. I have seen two examples which I was told were taken in Malta: the first was shown to me by Mr. Micallef, who obtained it in May about ten or eleven years ago; the second is the one which is preserved in the University Museum and which, like the majority of the older specimens, bears neither date nor locality.

Schembri gives simply *Ciuklajta* as the local name for this species, and Giglioli adds the adjective *rara*; I have given, however, the name which was used by Mr. Micallef and the one by which the specimen in the Museum is known.

52. (131) *Lullula arborea arborea* (L.). The Wood-Lark.

Local name : *Ciuklajta*.

Schembri calls this species rather rare and says that it occurs on passage in March and April, but not annually. Wright says it is less rare than the preceding, but cannot be considered common, and is met with in March and October. From my personal experience I can say that the species is not of annual occurrence and is generally rare. I have never met with it except in the autumn, though I have been assured by bird-dealers that it is to be also met with during the spring. During the autumn of 1911 these birds visited us in considerable numbers, but this is to be considered quite exceptional.

53. (130) *Alauda arvensis arvensis* L. The Sky-Lark.

Local name : *Aluetta*.

Occurs on migration during the autumn, when large flocks may be seen arriving almost daily. According to both Wright and Schembri, new arrivals are also noticed during the spring ; this statement, however, I have not yet been able to confirm, and it appears to me that the individuals which are observed during this season are only some of the birds which have passed the winter with us. It is true that the number of Larks brought into the market during the spring is at times considerable, but it must also be taken into account that the number of sportsmen who infest the country during that season is considerable too.

54. (135) *Ammomanes phœnicurus arenicolor* (Sundev.). Sundevall's Desert-Lark.

Local name : *Aluetta bajda*.

Having been assured by several sportsmen and netters that there are locally taken specimens preserved in some of the local private collections, I put the species as a very rare autumn visitor on my list of 1915, but having now examined several of such specimens I find that they are only isabelline forms of the common Sky-Lark. The species is, however, entitled to a place amongst the birds of Malta as there was a specimen in Dresser's collection, which was taken in Malta in April 1867, and, perhaps, on account of the one in Schembri's collection, reported as *Alauda lusitanica* by Wright.

55. (128) *Eremophila alpestris flava* (Gm.). The Shore-Lark.

Local name : *Aluetta safra*.

On the 2nd of October, 1912, a specimen of this species was brought to me by a country lad from Binghisa, who captured it in that locality while netting for Sky-Larks. About two months later I heard that a bird, which was named *Aluetta safra*, had been taken in Gozo by the Right Rev. Canon V. Attard. In January of the year following this gentleman visited my collection and, on seeing the

specimen in my collection, told me that the *Aluetta safra*, procured by him in December, was identical with it.

56. (133) *Chersophilus duponti duponti* (Vieill.). Dupont's Lark.

Local name : *Aluetta tad-desert*.

A specimen of this species was taken on the 15th of November, 1901, within the limits of Gargur; this was brought to Mr. Micallef, who, considering it justly a bird of unique occurrence in these islands, though in very bad condition, mounted it in the best way he could. In 1912, Mr. Leach, who was then curator, bought the specimen for the Museum, where it is at present preserved. It must be noted, however, that in 1912 the specimen was already in a deplorable state of preservation, so that it is now in a still worse condition. The local name appears to have been given by Mr. Micallef.

57. *Alæmon alaudipes alaudipes* (Desf.). Bifasciated Lark.

This is also a bird of unique occurrence in these islands. A specimen was sent to me on the 9th of December, 1916, by my friend the Hon. Jos. Zammit. It was taken a few days previously in the neighbourhood of Krendi by a netter of the village. My friend also assured me that about the same time another specimen was observed in the same locality, and that he was under the impression that the first specimen was somewhat larger than this.

Temminck says that this species has occurred in Sicily; Arrigoni, however, in his list of 1913, places the species amongst those erroneously figuring in Italy's avifauna, saying that further evidence is needed before admitting it amongst Italian birds.

58. (74) *Anthus richardi richardi* Vieill. Richard's Pipit.

Local name : *Bilblun salvagg*.

Schembri records a specimen procured on the 18th of December, 1840. Wright says that the species is accidental, and records two individuals which he saw at Forth Manoel Island, one of which he succeeded in shooting,

and another he says was recorded in October—the year, however, is not stated for this. In November 1911, Mr. Jos. Zammit sent to me a specimen, which he shot in the neighbourhood of Krendi; this, however, was in such an advanced state of decomposition that it could not be preserved. A few days later I received another specimen from my friend Mr. L. Cachia Zammit, who had taken it in the nets in the vicinity of Wied il Buni.

59. (73) *Anthus campestris campestris* (L.). The Tawny Pipit.

Local name : *Bilblun*.

Common, but by no means abundant like some of its congeners; it visits us regularly during the spring and at the beginning of autumn. Schembri and Wright both say that it is not to be met with during the winter, and though I found one in our market on the 4th of January, 1911, I am convinced that this must be considered only an exceptional case.

60. (69) *Anthus trivialis trivialis* (L.). The Tree-Pipit.

Local name : *Tizz*.

Pretty common on migration during the spring and autumn. Those which arrive during the latter season generally pass the winter with us. From my observations I can say that in the autumn they arrive a little later than the Meadow-Pipits, and I have also observed that in some years they appear to become somewhat scarce. According to Schembri, the local name *Tizz* is intended for the young of this species, the adult being known as *Pespus tal Giargir*. Wright, however, seems to have corrected this statement, giving simply the local name *Tizz*. On more recent lists Schembri's statement has been again repeated; it may be taken for certain, however, that the name now given is the one by which the Tree-Pipit is locally known.

61. (68) *Anthus pratensis* (L.). The Meadow-Pipit.

Local name : *Pespus*.

Occurs in considerable numbers during the autumn; the first arrivals are usually noticed in October; the bulk of

the birds, however, are never with us before the beginning of the following month. According to Wright, the species passes again in March; I believe, however, that the individuals observed during that month are only those which have lingered here after the autumn migration, and which have been so fortunate as to escape the net and the gun. The local name, *Pespus tal Giargir*, found in almost all other lists of the birds of Malta, has now fallen into disuse, and the bird is known at present by the simple name of *Pespus*.

62. (70) *Anthus cervinus* (Pall.). The Red-throated Pipit.
Local name: *Pespus ahmar*.

I quite agree with Wright, who states that this species has escaped notice, owing probably to its having been considered a variety. I have met with it very frequently from October to March; I cannot say, however, that it is common, and during some years it appears to be undoubtedly rare. In several lists the local name given is *Tizz ahmar*; I find, however, that the majority of netters and sportsmen know the species by the name given above.

63. (71) *Anthus spinoletta spinoletta* (L.). The Water-Pipit.

Local name: *Tizz salvagg*.

The species was first recorded by Schembri, who says that it was observed by Dr. Grech Delicata in October 1842. Wright records the capture of two specimens, one shot by him on Fort Manoel Island on the 5th of November, 1860, and another by Captain Feilden, in the same locality, in November 1873. The local name is taken from Giglioli's 'Avifauna Italica,' whence Blasius has probably adopted it.

64. (72) *Anthus spinoletta obscurus* (Lath.). The Rock-Pipit.

Local name: *Tizz rar*.

In my list of 1915 I said, by mistake, that this species has been twice recorded in these islands; I must now, however, correct that statement and say that the only occurrence of the Rock-Pipit in Malta is that recorded by Wright in

the third appendix to his list. Blasius reports the same record ; no local name, however, is given by either, the one which I have given has been suggested by the Hon. Prof. Magro.

65. (65) *Motacilla flava flava* L. The Blue-headed Wagtail.

Local name : *Isfar*.

Occurring in considerable numbers on migration in spring and autumn ; during the former season the first arrivals are noticed by the beginning of March, and during the latter season they are to be seen by the middle or end of August—solitary individuals may be met with at a much earlier date. Thousands are taken during both migrations ; these are most frequently sold to children, to meet, of course, a miserable end. They can be at times seen exposed as game on the stalls in the Market ; the majority of the population, however, consider these birds almost unfit for food. The local names, *Cacciamosc* or *Cappamosc*, and *Giarnell*, are generic—the first two are more frequently used in Malta, the last in Gozo, where different names are used for some of our birds.

66. *Motacilla flava cinereocapilla* Savi. The Ashy-headed Wagtail.

Local name : *Cacciamosc*.

Arrives together with the foregoing and is equally common. Our bird-catchers and dealers seem to make no difference between the two species, and call them indifferently by the names given in the foregoing note ; as a distinction, therefore, I have given *Cacciamosc* as the local name for this species, though I am sure that by most people it will continue to be called *Isfar*, or by either of the other two names. In my list of 1915 I did not include this species, though it has been also reported by Schembri and Wright.

67. (66) *Motacilla flava melanocephala* Licht. The Black-headed Wagtail.

Local name : *Obrox*.

Arrives together with its congeners, but it is by no means

as common, though Schembri says it is. Wright is undoubtedly more correct in saying that it arrives together with the foregoing, but is the rarest of them. From my observations I can say that these birds occur during some years in fairly good numbers; as a general rule, however, they are to be considered scarce.

68. (67) *Motacilla flava rayi* (Bp.). The Yellow Wagtail.
Local name: *Obrox rashu safra*.

Recorded by Wright in the fourth appendix to his list of the birds of Malta, where it is said that the specimen in the University Museum was taken in the spring of 1862. I have seen two specimens in the collection of Mr. Micallef and one at a dealer in St. John's Square—this last was taken in the vicinity of Krendi on the 12th of April, 1912; unfortunately it was in a very bad state of plumage, having the tail and primaries of both wings clipped off. The local name given I have adopted from the netters, and I think it is much better than the one given in the 'Catalogue of the Collection of the Birds of Malta,' *Giarnell*, which, as already stated, is only a generic name.

69. (64) *Motacilla boarula boarula* L. The Grey Wagtail.
Local name: *Zacac tad-dell*.

A regular migrant, which begins to arrive towards the end of summer, lingers here throughout the winter, and is to be met with until the middle of spring. It is never seen in flocks like its congeners, but mostly singly and more rarely in pairs. Late in the winter these birds may often be observed over the roofs of houses, even in Valletta, but in the spring they are rarely seen in these localities; at that time they are off in search of a suitable breeding-place—their nesting, however, is not so easily effected, as the poor birds will be truly fortunate if able to escape the man with the gun.

70. (62) *Motacilla alba lugubris* Temm. The Pied Wagtail.

Local name: *Zacac iswed*.

This species was first recorded for Malta in my list of

1915, where I stated that it is a very rare autumn visitor. Until that year, in fact, I had seen only about half-a-dozen specimens, all of which were taken at that time of the year. On the 5th of April, 1916, however, I met with a specimen at the dealer's in St. John's Square, but as it was minus a part of the tail and primaries, I thought it was not worth while preserving, knowing, moreover, that there is a fine specimen in the collection of our Museum. The local name above given I have picked up from the dealer, who possessed the just-mentioned mutilated bird.

71. (63) *Motacilla alba alba* L. The White Wagtail.

Local name: *Zacuc*.

Very common, and sometimes occurring in very large numbers during the autumn. Schembri says that these birds arrive here in September: I have never seen them, however, before the middle of October, when the first arrivals are generally noticed; a solitary individual may perhaps be seen early in October, but this is to be considered as quite exceptional. Great numbers of these Wagtails are taken yearly in the clap-nets, to meet, of course, the same miserable end as the other Wagtails. Wright says that the species is generally seen in small flocks, but I have often observed it in very large flocks as well. The local name *Ziczak*, which is found in Wright's 'List of the Birds of Malta,' is evidently a misprint.

72. (60) *Tichodroma muraria* (L.). The Wall-Creeper.

Local name: *Dakkuka tal gebel*.

On the 5th of November, 1904, a specimen of this species was shot in Wied Babu, a deep ravine in the vicinity of Zurrico, by my friend Mr. Jos. Zammit. Though it was picked up in a rather bad condition, seeing that it was a rarity, my friend did not fail to preserve it, and sent it to a local taxidermist, who set it up in the best way he could. The specimen is now in Mr. Zammit's collection. The local name was given to the bird by its capturer, and I think it is quite to the point—*Dakkuka* on account of its mode

of flight, which my friend said is very similar to that of the Hoopoe, and *tal gebel* is practically the equivalent of the Latin *muraria*.

73. (57) *Parus major major* L. The Continental Titmouse.

Local name : *Fiorentin*.

This is only an accidental visitor during the autumn ; at least the seven specimens which I have seen taken in Malta all occurred during that season. No mention is made by Schembri of this species, but I have seen a specimen in his collection labelled November 1843. Wright records two specimens, one taken in 1866 (no date, however, or locality is given), the other was captured at the Pietà on the 8th of October, 1871. I have three specimens in my collection ; the first I bought from Giulio Mallia in October 1908, another was brought to me from Zurrigo on the 10th of October, 1909, and a third I bought from a dealer, nicknamed Ferraru, on the 21st of October, 1911. There is a specimen in the University Museum—this, however, bears neither locality nor date. Besides the above-mentioned, I know two or three other specimens in private collections.

74. (58) *Parus cæruleus cæruleus* L. The Continental Blue Titmouse.

Local name : *Primavera*.

In my list of the birds of Malta of 1915 I stated that the species has been only once recorded in Malta, and I alluded to the specimen in our museum, which was taken at Zurrigo and purchased by the curator, Mr. C. Leach. Since the publication of the list, however, I found out that the late Prof. G. Gulia, in his 'Repertorio di Storia Naturale,' says that these Tits sometimes arrive in Gozo in great abundance, and that a few individuals have been known to occur in Malta too. Wright mentions this statement in the third appendix to his list of the birds of Malta, saying that Gulia is evidently mistaken. To-day also, Prof. Gulia's statement sounds incredible, as the birds are undoubtedly

of very rare occurrence in all the islands composing the Maltese group; but I quite remember when Mr. G. R. Busuttil, sent as a present to my father a dish-full of very small and beautifully coloured birds, which, according to the impression left on my memory, could only have been Blue Tits. The local name above given has been picked up from the dealers in St. John's Square. I cannot give, however, the reason why the birds are so called.

75. (59) *Parus cæruleus ultramarinus* Bp. Algerian Blue Tit.

Local name: *Primavera rasha griza*.

In the spring of 1908 Mr. Micallef showed me a specimen which he was preparing for Mr. Leach. I was told that Mr. Leach had bought it of Giulio Mallia, from whom I gathered that the bird was taken in the neighbourhood of Zurrico by a netter of the village. The words "*rasha griza*" added to the local name "*Primavera*" mean grey-headed, which I think will be easily accepted, as they point out the main difference which exists between this species and the previous one.

76. (36) *Regulus regulus regulus* (L.). The Continental Golden-crested Wren.

Local name: *Ziemel*.

Schembri says that these birds are very rare, and when they visit us it is generally during stormy weather in December and January. Wright also states that the species occurs in the winter, but he adds that, though it appears somewhat rare, it no doubt often escapes detection. I have seen only two specimens obtained in these islands—one was taken in 1899 and was preserved by Mr. Micallef, the other was sent to me in the flesh on the 10th of November, 1912, by my friend Mr. Jos. Zammit.

77. (37) *Regulus ignicapillus ignicapillus* Temm. The Fire-crested Wren.

Local name: *Ziemel tat-toppu ahmar*.

For this species Schembri and Wright repeat the same

statements given with the foregoing ; the latter, however, records a specimen shot by Mr. J. Horne on the 5th of November, 1860. From my observations I can say that this species is much more frequent than its congener, the Gold-crest ; it makes its appearance by the middle of autumn, and remains throughout the winter with us. I have often counted as many as a dozen individuals in our public gardens ; they are not, however, easily detected unless one knows them by their peculiar note. The words "*Tat toppu ahmar,*" which mean "fire-crested," have been added to distinguish this species from the Gold-crest.

78. (80) *Lanius minor* Gm. The Lesser Grey Shrike.

Local name : *Bughajjat second.*

A quite accidental visitor first recorded by Schembri, who says that several of these birds were noticed in September 1839, and others appeared in September and October of the following year ; after that date, however, Schembri states that he has seen but very few of these birds. Wright mentions the specimens recorded by Schembri, and states that one of these was still in this gentleman's collection when he published the list of birds observed in Malta and Gozo in 1864. In the fourth appendix to his list, Wright records a specimen obtained by him in September 1866. Giglioli and Blasius give the local name "*Bughajjat,*" the word "*second*" which has been added is only an equivalent of the English "Lesser," and it serves to distinguish this species from its larger congener, the Great Grey Shrike.

79. (76) *Lanius excubitor excubitor* L. The Great Grey Shrike.

Local name : *Bughajjat.*

Schembri records a specimen which was in the possession of Dr. G. C. Grech Delicata in 1842. I saw another specimen in Mr. Micallef's collection ; this was shot in the neighbourhood of Birchircara in the autumn of 1894 by Vincenzo Chicaci, a well-known sportsman of that village.

The local name given I obtained from Chicaci, and I am quite sure that the name *Cacciamendula* given by Giglioli with two points of interrogation is only intended for the Woodchat-Shrike.

80. (78) *Lanius excubitor meridionalis* Temm. The South European Grey Shrike.

Local name : *Bughiddiem*.

Schembri records a specimen shot from a flock of five by Mr. Baldassare Ellul in September 1837 ; he also states that the last specimen seen by him occurred in September 1839. Wright mentions also two specimens in his collection, one of which, he says, is a female in the plumage of the adult male, and was killed on the 12th of February, 1861. I have seen three specimens in Mr. Micallef's collection, one of which was shot in the neighbourhood of Gargur in the autumn of 1902 ; another was taken in the vicinity of Krendi in the autumn of 1906 ; and the third was bought in the Valletta market in the spring of 1909. Schembri, Giglioli, and Blasius give *Bughajjat* as the local name for this species, thus making no difference between it and the previous one. The name which I have selected is the one by which Mr. Micallef used to call the three specimens he possessed.

81. (82) *Lanius senator senator* L. The Woodchat-Shrike.

Local name : *Cacciamendula*.

This is one of our partial resident and breeding species ; it generally arrives late in the spring and is to be met with in small numbers throughout the summer. Fresh arrivals are usually observed towards the beginning of autumn, and these, together with those which arrived here in the spring and those bred locally, depart at the approach of winter. A few years ago this Shrike could be considered as pretty common. At present, however, it is undoubtedly very scarce : as a breeding-bird it is becoming rarer every year ; this is due to the local persecution it is subjected to.

82. (77) *Lanius fallax* Finsch. Finsch's Shrike.

Local name: *Bughajjat Ciar*.

I saw a mounted specimen of this species at Mr. Micallef's, and I am under the impression that the specimen was sent to him for mounting by Mr. Leach. I was told that the bird was captured in the neighbourhood of Zurrigo—the date of its capture, however, I could not find. The name given I have taken from Mr. Micallef.

83. (79) *Lanius algeriensis* Less. Algerian Grey Shrike.

Local name: *Bughiddiem ta Barbaria*.

I saw a specimen which was shot in the neighbourhood of Siggieui in November 1913, and another at a bird-dealer's at the Marnia, Valletta; this I was told was also taken in the island, in March 1914. It was in a rather bad state of plumage, and I think the dealer asked too much for it, anyhow I thought it was not worth preserving; I suspected, moreover, that it might have been an imported bird.

84. (81) *Lanius collurio collurio* L. The Red-backed Shrike.

Local name: *Cacciamendula hamra*.

Wright records a specimen obtained by Schembri after the publication of this gentleman's catalogue in 1843, and another which was found by him in the market; about this, however, he seems to have some doubts. I have a specimen in my collection which was shot at "il Brolli" in the vicinity of Birzebbugia on the 25th of October, 1908. Giglioli and Blasius give the local name for the species simply "*Cacciamendula*," this being, however, also given to the Woodchat, the adjective "*hamra*" (red) has been added as a distinction between the two.

85. (83) *Ampelis garrulus* L. The Waxwing.

Local name: *Sultan li spunsuni*.

A farmer at Zurrigo, Francesco Farrugia by name, captured two of these birds in January 1913. I did not see the specimens, but, from the description given me by Farrugia, I concluded that the birds in question were

nothing but a pair of Waxwings. I came to know also from another sportsman that a bird similar to those taken by Farrugia was captured on the 2nd of November, 1903. In my list of 1915 there is a misprint, and this can be seen from my list of new occurrences published in the 'Bulletin' of the Malta Historical and Scientific Society for 1913. The local name I got from a husbandman at "il Bakkari," who saw the birds taken in 1913, and who, on being shown a picture of the Waxwing, assured me that it represented exactly the birds he alluded to.

86. (84) *Muscicapa striata striata* (Pall.). The Spotted Flycatcher. [*M. grisola* auct.]

Local name: *Zanzarell griz*.

Schembri says that this species is not very common, occurring on passage mostly during the autumn, and, in the appendix to his catalogue, he says that it arrives also in the spring. According to Wright the species is very common in spring and autumn, arriving later than its congeners, and is one of the last to leave us in the spring. From my own observations I can only say that this Flycatcher is by no means common, and, though it is met with during the spring and autumn, it is more frequent during the former season. The adjective "*griz*" (grey) added to the local name *Zanzarell* serves to distinguish it from its congener, the Collared Flycatcher, which is called simply *Zanzarell*.

87. (85) *Muscicapa hypoleuca hypoleuca* (Pall.). The Pied Flycatcher. [*M. atricapilla* auct.]

Local name: *Zanzarell iswed*.

Schembri states that the Pied Flycatcher is not very common, and occurs on passage in March and December. According to Wright, it occurs also in spring and autumn, but is not common like the Spotted Flycatcher. Both Giglioli and Blasius give the local names *Zanzarell* and *Buswejda*. This last is undoubtedly only given to the Sardinian Warbler; the adjective "*iswed*" has been added for distinction, and it is already much in use.

88. (86) *Muscicapa collaris* Bechst. The Collared Flycatcher.

Local name: *Zanzarell*.

Wright says that this species arrives and departs about the same time as the Pied Flycatcher, and that Schembri has confounded these two birds. I consider this species rare—in fact, I have not yet succeeded in procuring a specimen for my collection; it also appears that the majority of bird-dealers and catchers do not even know the existence of the species, and those who have met with it call it simply “*Zanzarell*.” Giglioli and Blasius give *Buswejda* and *Zanzarell* also for this species—the former, as said already, is, however, intended for a totally different bird.

89. (87) *Muscicapa parva parva* Bechst. The Red-breasted Flycatcher.

Local name: *Zanzarell second*.

I have seen only one specimen of this species; it was taken by Francesco Farrugia (ta Majna) at “il Bakkari,” a locality midway between Birzebbugia and Zurricco, on the 7th of October, 1913, but several netters state that they have more than once met with the species. I give it here as rare and perhaps overlooked. The local name is almost an equivalent of the Latin.

90. (41) *Phylloscopus collybita collybita* Vieill. The Chiffchaff.

Local name: *Violin*.

The Chiffchaff is a pretty common migrant, which arrives here by the middle or end of autumn and remains with us throughout the winter. Schembri says that it is very common, and may be met with in winter even inside Valletta. Wright remarks that careful measurements of specimens taken by him and by some friends of his showed that the Chiffchaffs found in Malta are generally somewhat smaller than those from northern Europe; and that Sir William Jardine had also noticed this peculiarity in examples sent to him by Dr. Adams and by Wright himself. Schembri

and Wright give *Bufula* as the local name for this species; Giglioli and Blasius give *Bufula taxxitua*. I found, however, that *Bufula* is given to Marmora's Warbler, and though *Bufula taxxitua* is used by some, the local name given above is the one in more common use.

91. (38) *Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus* (L.). The Willow-Warbler.

Local name: *Rosinjol bastard*.

This species is not included in Schembri's catalogue. Wright, however, says that it is a bird of passage in March, April, September, and October, and that, though it does not appear to be very common, he obtained several specimens in both seasons; he also remarks that the individuals taken during the autumn are chiefly young of the year. I have heard from several observers that this species is found here during the winter; this, however, I have not yet been able to confirm. From my own experience, I can say that these birds are to be met with during the spring and autumn, when they are not at all common. Wright gives as the local name *Bufula*. Giglioli and Blasius besides this give also the one which is used here; and, as I have already stated, since the name *Bufula* is given to another species, it is better to keep for the present one the local name *Rosinjol bastard*.

92. (39) *Phylloscopus sibilatrix sibilatrix* (Bechst.). The Wood-Warbler.

Local name: *Bufula hadra*.

According to Schembri these birds arrive here in November and pass the winter with us. Wright, however, states that he could not confirm Schembri's last statement, and that in this he is supported by Dr. Adams's observations; he gives the species as common during the spring and autumn, and adds that, though he has not met with it in the winter, he saw it late in the autumn. I have seen it during the spring and autumn, and met with it twice in January. During some years these birds visit us in considerable

numbers; in others, however, they seem not to occur at all. The local name *Bufula* is given by Wright, Giglioli, and others. I find, however, that *Bufula hadra* is the name now more commonly used.

93. (42) *Phylloscopus superciliosus superciliosus* (Gm.).
The Yellow-browed Warbler.

Local name : *Violin rar.*

This species was first reported amongst our birds in the 'Catalogue of the Collection of the Birds of Malta,' published by Government in 1907; the specimen alluded to, however, appears to be only a very fine example of the Chiffchaff. On the 20th of February, 1913, I observed one of these birds at the upper Barracca, and four others at Sant' Antonio in March of the same year. Mr. Micallef assured me that he mounted a specimen for the University Museum, but I have not yet been able to trace his specimen. The local name above given has been suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro, and it is already in use.

94. (40) *Phylloscopus bonelli bonelli* (Vicill.). Bonelli's Warbler.

Local name : *Beccafic tal ful.*

Schembri says that this species is rather rare and passes the winter here; and Wright, without stating its frequency, says that it is a bird of passage in spring and autumn; he also seems to have procured several specimens, and has made comparisons between these and *P. trochilus*. I have met with it on two occasions only, consequently I consider the species very rare. The first one I saw was at Birzebbugia in the spring of 1909, the other one was given to me by my friend Mr. Salvatore Bonnici in the spring of 1911; this was, however, in such a bad condition that it could not be preserved. On showing this specimen to several persons, I was told by them that it is known by the local name *Beccafic tal ful* (Warbler of the beans), and this on account of its frequenting, as they said, the bean-fields where it hunts the aphids which generally infest those plants.

95. (53) *Cettia cetti cetti* (Marm.). Cetti's Warbler.

Local name : *Beccafic tal' ilma*.

Blasius having found this local name given in Giglioli's 'Avifauna Italica,' included the species in his list of Maltese birds. I saw a specimen in a very bad state of preservation at Mr. Micallef's in 1912. It was labelled "*Occhio rosso, Beccafic tal ilma, Malta Aprile 1901.*" For these reasons I give the species a place amongst our avifauna, though further evidence is certainly desirable.

96. (50) *Luscinia melanopogon melanopogon* (Temm.). The Moustached Warbler.

Local name : *Beccafic kastni*.

Recorded by Wright, who says that a specimen in the possession of Sir William Jardine was shot by Dr. L. Adams at the Marsa on the 11th of November, 1866. The local name given by Giglioli is "*Beccafic ahmar,*" but, as the Whitethroat is known by this name, I think the name here given, suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro, which is a translation of the Italian "*Forapaglie castagnuolo,*" is much more to the point.

97. (52) *Locustella luscinioides luscinioides* (Savi). Savi's Warbler.

Local name : *Bufula griza*.

Schembri reported this species on the authority of Dr. G. C. Grech Delicata, who assured him that he met with it in November 1842. Mr. Micallef procured a specimen about twelve years ago. This, however, I have not seen. The local name given by Giglioli is *Bufula griza rara*. As we have not, however, any bird known by the name *Bufula griza*, it is better to leave the adjective *rara* out.

98. (51) *Locustella fluviatilis* (Wolf). The River-Warbler.

Local name : *Beccafic taxxmajjar*.

Reported by Schembri on the authority of Dr. G. C. Grech Delicata. The local name given is a translation of the Latin, and has been suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro.

99. (47) *Acrocephalus arundinaceus arundinaceus* (L.).
The Great Reed-Warbler.

Local name : *Baghal*.

Both Schembri and Wright say that this species is not common, and that it occurs on passage during the autumn. From my personal experience I can say that during some years it is pretty common, especially during the autumn, and I have often met with it also during the spring. In 1911 these birds were exceptionally abundant during both seasons, and many were taken, especially in September and October. Besides the name here used, Giglioli gives *Gharab*. This, however, I have never heard, and at present is undoubtedly not in use.

100. (46) *Acrocephalus streperus streperus* (Vieill.). The Reed-Warbler.

Local name : *Baghal second*.

Both Schembri and Wright say that this species is not common, and that it occurs on passage in September and October. Wright records a specimen taken in the last week of August by Mr. J. Horne. I have never met with the Reed-Warbler, and personally consider it very rare. The local name given is taken from Giglioli.

101. (49) *Acrocephalus schœnobæus* (L.). The Sedge-Warbler.

Local name : *Baghal terz*.

Schembri says that this species is rather common, and occurs on passage in March and September. Wright says it is not uncommon in April, May, September, and October, but is not seen in any great numbers. I have only met with the species about a dozen times, and this was always during the spring. Schembri gives the local name *Violin*, but this, as we have seen, is applied to the Chiffchaff; so I think that the one I have selected, which has been suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro, is to be preferred.

102. (48) *Acrocephalus aquaticus* (Gm.). The Aquatic Warbler.

Local name : *Baghal rar*.

On the 5th of October, 1909, a country lad from Bingham, known by the name of "Wigital Musu," brought me some Nightingales, among which, he said, there was a *Baghal rar*. This I found to be a specimen of this species, so I have kept the local name given by its captor as one which might be retained. I was assured by the lad that the species is not so rare as I imagined, though he called the bird by that name. I must confess, however, that the specimen above mentioned is the only one I have seen.

103. (43) *Hippolais icterina* (Vicill.). The Icterine Warbler.

Local name : *Bufula tar-rebbigha*.

Wright says that this species has been often confounded with its congener *H. polyglotta*, and it occurs regularly in April, May, September, and October. He also states that Schembri included in his catalogue *H. polyglotta* instead of the present species. From my own observations I cannot but consider the species as irregular and rare ; in fact, I have not been able to procure a specimen since 1908. Several who seem to know the species assure me that it is to be met with only during the spring, and that they know it by the name of *Bufula tar-rebbigha*, which signifies "the warbler of spring."

104. (44) *Hippolais polyglotta* (Vicill.). The Melodious Warbler.

Local name : *Beccafic isfar*.

Wright says that he has never seen this species, though Schembri includes it in his list. I obtained an individual, shot by my friend Mr. S. Bonnici on the 18th of September, 1908. The bird was presented to me as the *Beccafic isfar*, by which name it appears to be known by several country people, who assert that the species occurs in fair numbers during some years. Of this, however, there appears to be need of further evidence.

105. (33) *Sylvia hortensis hortensis* (Gm.). The Orphean Warbler. [*Sylvia orphea* auct.]

Local name: *Beccafic abjad*.

Schembri says that this species is not common, but occurs annually in March, September, and October. According to Wright, it appears to be rare, and he records a single specimen seen by him which was sent to Sir William Jardine in 1858. Besides this he mentions Tallack's statement that this bird is common in the soldiers' cemetery at Floriana (and I take here the opportunity to say that Tallack is most inaccurate in several of his statements about Malta). I consider this Warbler as a generally rare species, though it occurs in considerable numbers during some years. In the spring of 1907 it arrived in fairly good numbers; since that year, however, I very seldom met with it. The local name given is taken from Giglioli.

106. (27) *Sylvia borin borin* (Bodd.). The Garden-Warbler. [*Sylvia hortensis* auct.]

Local name: *Beccafic*.

Generally common, occurring on migration during both seasons, when it is taken in great numbers and brought into the market for sale. If it were not so much sought after and persecuted, I think it would breed here freely enough. I have found its nests several times. Schembri, too, says that the species sometimes breeds with us, and Wright states that as many as a hundred dozen are sometimes brought at a time into the market. It appears, however, that now, the bird being protected, it is not often seen exposed for sale, though many are still being taken and consumed by the netters themselves.

107. (32) *Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla* (L.). The Blackcap.

Local name: *Capinera*.

Schembri says that a few individuals arrive in March and April, and Wright states that the species, which he considers uncommon, has been observed in January, February, March, September, and October. I have usually met with it from February to April and from October to November,

and, though it occurs annually, I consider it rare. Schembri gives it the local name *Beccafic*, and Giglioli and Blasius *Beccafic rasu seuda*. The name here given, however, is the one more commonly used.

108. (25) *Sylvia communis communis* Lath. The White-throat.

Local name : *Beccafic ahmar*.

According to Schembri, this species is rather common, occurring on passage in March and September, at times breeding also with us. Wright says it is one of the commonest of the Sylviidae in spring and autumn, but does not say anything about its breeding here. I have known these birds to occur in considerable numbers in some seasons, but have found their nests only four times. The local name *Beccafic ahmar* appears first in Schembri's catalogue.

109. (26) *Sylvia curruca curruca* (L.). The Lesser White-throat.

Local name : *Beccafic irmi di*.

Schembri says that he never saw this species, and reports it in his catalogue on the authority of Dr. Delicata, who found an individual in September 1842. Wright records the same occurrence, adding that he had never met with it himself. During the past eight years I have seen at least twenty specimens. I must say, however, that these birds are scarce, though it may be that they are often overlooked. The local name is given by Schembri, thus showing that Schembri also gave names to birds of very rare occurrence, or, at least, he accepted names which had been suggested to him.

110. (31) *Sylvia melanocephala melanocephala* (Gm.). The Sardinian Warbler.

Local name : *Buswejda*.

Both Schembri and Wright do not seem to consider this species as common, and they state that it generally appears during the winter months. From my personal experience I can say that, though it is rather irregular in its visits, it

sometimes occurs in pretty large numbers during the winter and the spring, and it generally remains here to breed; I do not understand therefore why Wright says that he has never known the species to breed with us. The name *Ghasfur tal harrub*, given by Wright to this species, is used indifferently for many Warblers, and the name *Bugriza*, given in Giglioli's 'Avifauna Italica' is one which I have never heard.

111. (30) *Sylvia cantillans cantillans* Pall. The Subalpine Warbler. [*Sylvia subalpina* auct.]

Local name: *Ghasfur il harrub*.

Schembri says that this Warbler is not very rare, and occurs on passage in March and September. Wright repeats almost the same statement. I consider the species as usually rare, occurring during both seasons; it sometimes nests. On exceptional occasions it has been observed in considerable numbers. This happened, for example, in 1916, when I noted it as early as February 25. Though in other lists several local names are given to this species, I find the one which I have selected is that in most common use.

112. (34) *Sylvia undata undata* (Bodd.). The Provence Warbler.

Local name: *Ghasfur tas'sigiar ahmar*.

The Provence Warbler was first reported amongst the birds of Malta by Schembri on the authority of Dr. Grech Delicata, the statement being also repeated by Wright. In 1910-11 it appeared in fairly good numbers; so much, in fact, that some remained and nested with us. Since then I have observed single individuals almost yearly, but this Warbler being of very retiring habits, I am inclined to think that it is much overlooked. I by no means, however, mean to say that it is not rare. The local name here given appears on almost all lists.

113. (35) *Sylvia sarda* Temm. Marmora's Warbler.

Local name: *Bufula*.

I do not know whether any of our birds is more irregular in its visits than this Warbler. At one time I used to

consider it as fairly common and occurring every year. In spite of this, however, I remember years when it did not appear at all. This happened, for example, in 1909-10-11 and 1914. In 1915 I met with it rather frequently from January to May, but in 1916 I did not come across it. Giglioli gives *Bufula griza* for this species; but, as this is given also to Savi's Warbler, and the simple name *Bufula* is not given to any species on our list, I think we may well leave it for this bird.

114. (45) *Agrobates galactotes galactotes* (Temm.). The Rufous Warbler.

Local name : *Rosinjol ta Barbarja*.

Schembri says that he met with this species during three passage seasons, and that from 1840 onwards some specimens were taken annually in September. Wright says it is rare and does not occur every year. In his fifth appendix he records an individual which was taken on the 23rd of May, 1873. I have seen only one specimen, which was captured on the 17th of September, 1909, so I consider the species is undoubtedly rare. The local name here given has been suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro, it being almost an equivalent of the Italian *Rusignolo africano*.

115. (4) *Turdus pilaris* L. The Fieldfare.

Local name : *Mulvizzun*.

Schembri says that this Thrush is very common, and occurs on passage in January, when it remains here for a part of the winter. Wright says it is the latest of the Thrushes which visit us in the winter, and is seldom seen before January, when a few are taken annually. He also says that it lingers here for a few weeks. I have met with the species from October to March; it is, however, more common during the first two months of the year. It also appears to be not of annual occurrence, for during some years not a single individual is to be seen. In 1913-14 these birds arrived in tolerably large numbers, and they were brought by dozens into the market daily.

116. (1) *Turdus viscivorus viscivorus* L. The Mistle-Thrush.

Local name : *Malvizzun rar*.

This is not included in Schembri's catalogue. Wright records a specimen obtained by him on the 1st of February, 1861 and another obtained by Mr. Thorne on the 2nd of December of the same year; a third was obtained also by him in the winter of 1862 and two others in the autumn of the following year. I saw a specimen in the autumn of 1905, and obtained one on the 15th of January, 1910. The adjective *rar* has been added to the local name *Malvizzun* to distinguish it from the foregoing.

117. (2) *Turdus philomelus philomelus* Brehm. The Continental Song-Thrush. [*T. musicus* auct.]

Local name : *Malvizz*.

According to Schembri, this species is commonly found here on passage in January and October. Wright says it is very abundant in October and November; a few continue to be seen until December, and it passes again in March. From my personal observations I can say that this Thrush generally appears in October. The greater number of the birds, however, appear in November. It is also to be met with throughout the winter, fresh arrivals being often noticed in January, and usually a plentiful migration is observed again in March. I remember some years when the species occurred in immense numbers; on the contrary, I know others when it was very scarce. The local name *Malvizz kamb*, which is to be met with on several lists, appears to have fallen into disuse.

118. (3) *Turdus musicus* L. The Redwing. [*T. iliacus* auct.]

Local name : *Malvizz almar*.

In Schembri's catalogue this species is reported on the authority of Dr. G. C. Greeh Delicata, who records a specimen met with by him in November 1842. Wright

records two individuals obtained by him in November and December 1861, and a third obtained by Mr. T. Horne on the 2nd of the latter month. The first specimen I have seen was taken at Halfar in December 1909; from that year I met with the species annually, and during the winter of 1912-13 I found that these birds occurred in fairly good numbers in the Valletta Market. I obtained more than a dozen specimens, the majority of which I mounted. The local name given by Giglioli and Blasius is *Malvizz rar*. I find, however, that several sportsmen and poulterers who happen to have met with the species, know it by the local name given above; this name after all is only a translation of the Sicilian *Turdus russu*.

119. (6) *Turdus sibiricus* Pall. Siberian Thrush.

Local name: *Malvizz tal Lvant*.

In October 1912, Mr. C. Lanzon obtained one of these birds, which was taken in the bat-net together with some other Thrushes by a bird-catcher from Zurrigo, known by the name of "Angbu il Marrara"; I heard of the occurrence. At the time, however, the bird was wrongly identified by a gentleman as *Turdus varius*. After some time I visited Mr. Lanzon's aviary and found that the specimen in question belonged to the present species. Unfortunately the bird died while Mr. Lanzon was away from the place, and the servants, being quite ignorant of its rarity, did not preserve it. The local name of this bird, as Mr. Lanzon stated, was given to it by its capturer, and I think it might well be kept for the species, as it only signifies "Eastern Thrush."

120. (7) *Turdus torquatus torquatus* L. The Ring-Ouzel.

Local name: *Malvizz tas'sidra rar*.

According to Schembri this species is rare and occurs on passage in October and November; he also states that he had seen five specimens between 1830 and 1843. According to Wright, it is the rarest of the Thrushes. Nevertheless,

a winter seldom passes without some being procured. I have seen only two specimens taken in the island: the first was in Mr. Micallef's collection, and was obtained in January 1902, the second, which is in my collection, was obtained by me from the Valletta Market on the 2nd February, 1910. The local name has been modified at the suggestion of the late Prof. Tagliaferro, to distinguish it from the following species, which appears to be the more common of the two, and which is perhaps alluded to by both Schembri and Wright under the Latin name of *T. torquatus*.

121. (8) *Turdus torquatus alpestris* (Brehm). The Alpine Ring-Ouzel.

Local name : *Malvizz tas-sidra bajda*.

I have seen at least twenty specimens of this species which was taken in the island, and this makes me consider it more common than the foregoing. Mr. Micallef, who handled several of these birds, says that the majority of them were of the present form. The local name is the one given by Schembri for *T. torquatus*, which, as I have already stated, is most probably intended for this form.

122. (5) *Turdus merula merula* L. The Blackbird.

Local name : *Malvizz iswed*.

Occurs on passage during the autumn, and is to be seen almost throughout the winter ; it is sometimes noticed in March, and I have also obtained specimens during April. In 1911 these birds visited us ; they made their first appearance in the last week of October, and could be seen until the middle of spring. Mackay's statement that it (the Blackbird) breeds here is undoubtedly an error, and it has probably been confounded with the Blue Rock-Thrush, which by some people here is erroneously called by the English name of Blackbird. Giglioli and Blasius call this bird also by the local name *Malvizz tat-troffa*, but, though I have heard it from a few persons, I can give it for certain that it is not much in use, the Blackbird being locally known as *Malvizz iswed*.

123. (9) *Monticola saxatilis* (L.). The Rock-Thrush.

Local name: *Gianbublu*.

Fairly common during both the spring and autumn, more abundant however in the former season, when it is sometimes taken in large numbers and brought into the market; it is usually plucked of its feathers and sold as a Song-Thrush. Schembri states that the species is not rare, and Wright that it arrives in pairs; evidently, therefore, it is one of the few which may be said to be on the increase.

124. (13) *Monticola solitarius solitarius* (L.). The Blue Rock-Thrush. [*Monticola cyanus* auct.]

Local name: *Merill*.

One of our common resident and breeding species which cannot possibly escape detection, even by the most superficial observer; as it is not included in Mackay's list, it is only natural to suppose that the Blue Rock-Thrush was the bird which he mistook for the Blackbird when he said that this last bird breeds near Musta. The Blue Rock-Thrush is one of our protected species, and it is badly in need of such a protection, as it is showing a very marked decrease. The bird was once known locally by the name "*Ciccu di Diu*," which is said to be a corruption of "*Cieco giudeo*"; this is, however, very seldom used at present, the common local name being the one given above.

125. (11) *Œnanthe œnanthe œnanthe* (L.). The Wheatear.

Local name: *Cuda*.

Both Schembri and Wright give this species as widely spread over the island during the spring and autumn. According to my observations, I can say that it is to be met with during both seasons, but is more common in the autumn when it begins to arrive at the end of August or during the first days of September; the bulk of the birds, however, are rarely noticed before the last week of this month. In the spring the first arrivals are observed by the beginning

of March. The local name given by Giglioli and Blasius to this species is *Cuda bianca*. I find, however, that this is given by bird-catchers and dealers to the *Æ. hispanica*, the present species being locally known by the simple name *Cuda*.

126. (12) *Ænanthe leucopyga* (Brehm). The White-rumped Wheatear.

Local name : *Cuda rasha bajda*.

In the fifth appendix to his list of the birds of Malta, Wright records an example of this species shot on the 18th of April, 1872, by Signor Vitali on some rocky ground called "Tal Capuccini" on the south side of the Grand Harbour. The specimen was mounted by Signor Francesco Ellul, and passed into Wright's hands immediately afterwards. It is at present in the museum at Florence. The local name is the equivalent of the Latin.

127. (13) *Ænanthe hispanica hispanica* (L.). The Russet Wheatear. [*Saxicola stapanina* auct.]

Local name : *Cuda bianca*.

Occurs on passage during both seasons, but is not common. I remember some seasons when it appeared not to turn up at all. Schembri records it as arriving together with *Æ. ænanthe*, adding that it is not so common. Wright considered it comparatively scarce, and states that it arrives together with the common species, but perhaps a little later. I find that this is the species which is commonly called by our sportsmen *Cuda bianca*; Giglioli and Blasius, besides this name, give also *Dum nican*. This last is, however, intended for the Black-eared Chat (*Æ. aurita* auct.), which is now believed to be a dimorphism of the present species. Blasius gives another local name, *Cuda bastarda*; this, however, I have never heard.

128. (14) *Ænanthe hispanica xanthomelæna* (Hemp. & Ehr.). Eastern Russet Wheatear.

Local name : *Soru*.

This species was first recorded by Wright under the name

of *Saxicola melanoleuca* in the fifth appendix to his list of Maltese birds. I have met with this species three times during the spring. I consider, however, the bird as rare. The local name *Soru* I obtained from some bird-catchers who appear to be ignorant of the names given by both Giglioli and Blasius.

129. (16) *Saxicola rubetra rubetra* (L.). The Whinchat.
Local name : *Buciak*.

It has been stated that this species occurs commonly enough during both spring and autumn. According to my own observations, however, I can say that, although I have met with it most frequently during the former season, I find that in the latter it appears to be very scarce. The local name *Buciak tal Cudi* seems to have fallen into disuse ; the one which has been selected, however, is also given to the Stonechat.

130. (17) *Saxicola torquata rubicola* (L.). Stonechat.
Local name : *Buzafzaf*.

Schembri says that this species is as common as the preceding, with which it generally arrives. Wright says that it arrives in spring and autumn, but is rather more common than the Whinchat ; he also observes that, unlike its congener, it passes the winter with us. From my own observations I can say that it occurs on passage during the autumn, when it begins to arrive towards the beginning of November, and is to be seen here almost throughout the winter or till the beginning of spring, when it generally departs for northern latitudes to breed. Those who make a difference between this and the foregoing species know the bird by the local name given above.

131. (18) *Phœnicurus phœnicurus phœnicurus* (L.). The Redstart.

Local name : *Fiamma*.

Occurs on migration during both seasons, but appears to be more common during the autumn, when it makes its

appearance during the last week of August. The bulk of the birds, however, are not seen before the second week of the following month, when many of them are taken in nets set for them and several other Warblers, all of which are sold as "beccaficos." I have never met with these birds in November, though Schembri states that they are also with us during that month. Besides the local name here given, the bird is also known as *Cudiross*, *Ta dembu*, and *Ta dembu ahmar*.

132. (19) *Phœnicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis* (Gm.).
The Black Redstart. [*Phœnicurus titys* auct.]

Local name: *Fianma Sewda*.

Both Schembri and Wright consider this species as not so common as the preceding, with which it generally arrives; Wright adds, moreover, that he has occasionally met with these birds when the winter was far advanced. I can say that the species is scarce and almost of rare occurrence; I have seen it, however, during the spring and autumn, and on two occasions met with it during the winter too. During the autumn it is seen later than its congener—in fact, I am of opinion that it is usually seen when the other is already gone. Though, as I have stated above, the species is generally rare, I remember two seasons when it was exceptionally common, and could be very easily procured.

133. (23) *Luscinia megarhyncha megarhyncha* Brehm.
The Nightingale.

Local name: *Rosinjol*.

Generally occurring abundantly during the spring and autumn. During the former season it usually appears in April, and can be met with until the middle of May; during the latter it is first seen in September, and continues to be met with until November. Great numbers are taken in nets especially set for them during both passage-seasons; these are very often brought over to the Valletta Market, or are consigned to the pot in a somewhat shorter way.

134. (24) *Luscinia luscinia* (L.). The Eastern Nightingale.
Local name: *Rosinjol prin.*

The first specimen I met with was taken in the nets together with the Common Nightingale, near Hal Far, on the 29th of September, 1910, by a country-lad known by the name of "Wigi tal Musu." On showing the bird to several countrymen, I was told by them that during some seasons these birds arrive in fairly good numbers. I saw two more specimens in September 1912. The local name given I learned from the lad who brought me the first bird.

135. (20) *Luscinia suecica cyanecula* (Wolf). The White-spotted Bluethroat.

Local name: *Cudiross sidutu cahla.*

In the fourth appendix to his list of Maltese birds, under the name of *Cyanecula suecica*, Wright gives the following note:—"On the 28th of March, 1869, a male of the white-spotted form of this bird was shot in a field of *Hedysarum coronarium*. It has before been occasionally killed in Malta, but it is so extremely rare that this was the first specimen that ever came into my hands in the flesh; the blue of the breast was very brilliant, and the pectoral spot of a pure silvery white. Several others were seen and shot about the same time." I have seen only one specimen taken alive at Malta—it was in Mr. Micallef's collection, and was captured in April 1917.

136. (21) *Luscinia suecica suecica* (L.). The Red-spotted Bluethroat.

Local name: *Cudiross sidutu cahla u safra.*

Schembri says that this is one of the rarest species of the family, and that whenever specimens are taken this happens always in March and August. Wright says that the individuals he examined had the pectoral spot very light rufous or pure white. There are two specimens in the University Museum; these, however, bear neither date nor locality, and I have not yet heard from anyone that they have been captured in the island. Moreover, there seems to be some

confusion about this and the foregoing species in Schembri's and Wright's catalogues, consequently I cannot but give the occurrence of this species as one in need of further evidence.

137. (22) *Dandalus rubecula rubecula* L. The Continental Redbreast.

Local name : *Pitirross*.

Pretty common, during some years occurring in rather large numbers. The first arrivals are generally noticed about the second or third week of October, and in a few days our valleys are full of these birds. The majority remain here for the winter, and those which are fortunate enough to escape the gun, the net, or one of the many traps set for their capture, generally depart at the approach of spring.

138. (54) *Crateropus fulvus fulvus* (Desfont.). The Algerian Bush-Babbler.

There is an example of this species in our Natural History Museum, consequently the bird figures in the 'Catalogue of the Collection of the Birds of Malta.' I was assured by Mr. Micallef that the bird was mounted by him, and that he received it in the flesh in 1902, so that he did not doubt for a moment that the example was locally taken. In spite of all this, however, I think that the occurrence is one of those which require further evidence.

139. (55) *Prunella collaris collaris* (Scop.). The Alpine Accentor.

Local name : *Zerzur prin*.

The first example which came under my observation was mounted by Mr. Micallef, who had asked me to identify it for him on the 14th of January, 1913. I learned from the same gentleman that the bird was sent to him in the flesh a few days before. Some time afterwards I came to know that a farmer from Gargur, Giuseppe Parnis (ta Bennard), had shot six of these birds in the vicinity of his village,

on the 11th of the same month. I have seen two or three of these specimens, but I could not make out if the one mounted by Mr. Micallef was one of the six specimens shot by Parnis or a different one altogether. On the 20th of November, 1916, a specimen was shot within the limits of Siggiewi by my friend Mr. Jos. Zammit, who sent it to me, and it now forms part of my collection. The adjective *prin* added to the local name signifies "greater."

140. (56) *Prunella modularis modularis* (L.). The Continental Hedge-Sparrow.

Local name : *Zerzur*.

According to Schembri this species is very rare, generally appearing in December and January. Wright calls it rather rare, and records several captures from November to May ; I have seen it taken in spring and autumn, but never in the winter. The local name *Canal salvagg* is given in several lists for this bird ; I find, however, that none of the bird-dealers and netters know the species by such a name. On the contrary, I met with several others who know it by the one I have given, and this I heard for the first time from my friend Mr. C. Zammit Gauci, who is one of our best taxidermists and a very keen observer of our birds.

141. (61) *Troglodytes troglodytes troglodytes* (L.). The Wren.

Local name : *Ghasfur tal mattemp*.

Reported by Blasius on the authority of Giglioli, who, besides giving the local name, says that the species is of accidental occurrence in Malta. I am under the impression that some years ago I handled one of these birds, which was captured at Wied iz-Zurrik, and I have heard from several other observers of the occurrence of the species in these islands ; despite all this, however, further evidence is desirable.

142. (88) *Hirundo rustica rustica* L. The Swallow.

Local name : *Huttafa*.

The Swallow visits us in fair numbers during its migrations

in spring and autumn. During the former season it is generally noticed early in March, and continues to be met with until May. During the latter season, the first arrivals are observed towards the end of September, and thereafter they are often to be met with until the end of October; single individuals may also be seen late in November. Wright says that specimens of the variety *H. rustica orientalis* have also been taken, and Schembri states that a couple or two of the Swallow at times breed here; this, however, I have not yet been able to confirm.

143. (89) *Hirundo daurica rufula* Temm. The Red-rumped Swallow.

Local name: *Huttafa hamra*.

Reported by Wright, who gives the following occurrences:—(a) Three individuals observed by him and Dr. Adams at the Salina on the 5th of April, 1862—of these Dr. Adams succeeded in shooting one. (b) A day or two afterwards Dr. Adams shot another one from the same place and saw several others. (c) Another, taken in April 1870—for this, however, no locality is given. The local name is given by Blasius and Giglioli. In Giglioli's list, however, it is *Huttafa hambra*, which is evidently a misprint.

144. (90) *Delichon urbica urbica* (L.). The Martin.

Occurs on passage together with the Swallow, and according to Wright, it seems to remain here a part of the winter when *H. rustica* has departed. According to Schembri, it passes the greater part of the winter here, when it can be seen flying about the streets of Valletta; this, however, is assuredly a thing of the past.

145. (91) *Riparia riparia riparia* (L.). The Sand-Martin.

Local name: *Hawwiefa tax-xlut*.

This, too, occurs on passage during the spring and autumn, but not always in the same quantity. I remember years when these birds visited us in very great numbers; I quite remember some seasons, however, when they were rather

scarce. Schembri says that they are abundant in September, March, and April, but do not remain here for more than one month. Wright states that they are common in spring and autumn, but arrive a little later than the Martin. The local name, which is an equivalent of the Latin, has been suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro.

146. (92) *Riparia rupestris* (Scop.). The Crag-Martin.

Local name : *Hawwiefa tal blat*.

Schembri says that this species is rather common both in April and September. Wright, in his 'List of the Birds of Malta,' says that he had never met with it. In the first appendix to his list, however, he states that he met with it in Gozo in December 1864, when he saw several individuals. On the 26th of January, 1865, he also observed it, and again on the 20th February of the same year; he also says that about the same time he came across a specimen in the Valletta Market. In his second appendix he records one taken in Gozo by Dr. Adams on the 28th of February, 1864, and another obtained by him on the 8th of March of the same year. In his fifth appendix he again records the species, saying that he had seen several specimens in Gozo on two successive days at Christmas-time 1873. In my 'List of the Birds of Malta' of 1915, I gave this species as one of doubtful occurrence, and must confess that I had overlooked the observations made by Wright; I must add, however, that, though I have looked for the species most diligently, I have not yet succeeded in seeing a single specimen. The local name given is a translation of the Latin, and has been suggested by the Hon. Dr. Magro. Of the two local names given by Giglioli and Blasius, one does not distinguish the species from its congeners, the other is not in use.

[To be continued.]